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THE ORPHAN HOUSE
OF WESLEY.

W. W. STAMP



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THE ORPHAN-HOUSE.

ERECTED BY MR. WESLEY, 1742, OUTSIDE THE PILGRIM-STREET GATE,
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

THE ORPHAN-HOUSE OF WESLEY;

WITH

NOTICES OF EARLY METHODISM

IN

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE,

AND ITS VICINITY.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM W. STAMP.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

In the attempt here made to trace the establishment and spread of Wesleyan Methodism in the northern districts of the country, the Orphan-House of Wesley, erected in the year 1742, outside the Pilgrim-street Gate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is taken as an historic centre. In the early annals and subsequent appropriation of this ancient structure, and in the evangelizing influences emanating thence, when religious apathy or open ungodliness characterized the whole of the surrounding neighbourhood, Wesleyans in general, it is apprehended, will feel a lively interest; whilst to those resident in the immediate vicinity few spots will appear surrounded with such a halo of pleasing and hallowed reminiscences as the "quaint old building," which was for a lengthened period the home of Wesley and his "helpers" when sojourning in the north. Its erection by the founder of the Body; the truly eminent and devoted men, giants-ecclesiastic of their day, who proclaimed within its walls the word of life; the impulse thereby given to surrounding churches; the results attendant on its Sabbath-school, —the first, and for many years, the only institution

of the kind in the north of England; the number of the sainted dead once associated with its worship and service; all render the "Old House" a place replete with interest.

For much interesting information the Author is indebted to the "Journals of Wesley;" the earlier volumes of the "Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine;" the "Lives of Early Methodist Preachers;" various authentic biographic records still extant; Smith's "History of Wesleyan Methodism;" and also the valuable "Life of Charles Wesley," from the pen of the venerable Thomas Jackson, S.T.P.

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THE ORPHAN-HOUSE OF WESLEY.

CHAPTER I.

1742, 1743.

Mr. Wesley's first visit to Newcastle—Preaches in Sandgate—Great excitement—Mr. Charles Wesley labours for some weeks in Newcastle and its vicinity—Robert Fairlamb—Jonathan Simpson—Matthew Errington—Mr. Wesley's second visit to Newcastle—Examination of the Society—Singular outward manifestations—Preaching at Whickham and Swalwell—Erection of the Orphan-House—The building described—Mr. Wesley's study—The Quaker's dream—Friendliness of the vicar—Provisions of the Orphan-House Deed—Probable design of the erection—The Orphan-House at Halle—Northern Daily Express.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, the metropolis of the north of England, was one of the earliest scenes of the venerated Wesley's public ministrations and success. Within three years from the rise of the "United Society," (which consisted in 1739 of "eight or ten persons,") Methodism was planted there.

On Friday, May 28th, 1742, Mr. Wesley, accompanied by John Taylor, (who then acted as his travelling companion, but soon after settled in London,) paid his first visit to Newcastle, taking up his abode at a small inn, on the Gateshead side of the old bridge. What specially induced him to wend his way northward is not known; unless, indeed, his unexpected success among the col-

liers of Kingswood had awakened sympathy and hope as to their equally degraded and neglected brethren-of-the-pit elsewhere. In his "Short History of the People called Methodists," he states that he had long had a desire to visit the poor colliers in Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and, having at this period journeyed northward as far as Birstal, he was, it would seem, induced to proceed.

To the irreligion and licentiousness then unhappily prevalent, Newcastle presented no exception. "So much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing, even from the mouths of little children," observes the stranger-evangelist, "do I never remember to have seen and heard before." A new heathendom—another Kingswood, in spiritual destitution akin to the former—lay before him: yet, so far from awakening a feeling of despair, or leading him to regret the errand on which he had come, the abounding and almost unexampled wickedness nerved his spirit to prompt and zealous effort. "Surely," he congratulates himself, "this place is ripe for Him who 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.'" Nor was he disappointed.

Acting upon the maxim which in after years he urged upon his "helpers" in the ministry,—"Go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most,"—Mr. Wesley, with his companion, was found the Sabbath morning following, at seven o'clock, in Sandgate; then "the poorest and most contemptible part of the town," and still maintaining that sad distinction. Taking their stand at the end of the street, the two unite in singing the hundredth Psalm. Three or four of the residents quickly turn out to see what is the matter; and soon, attracted by the novelty of the scene, some four to five hundred others throng around. To their great astonishment, one of the strangers, habited as a clergyman, opens a Bible in his hand, and begins to preach, taking as his text the solemn announcement of the evangelical

prophet: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." Ere the service closes, not less, perhaps, than fifteen hundred persons are congregated. The benediction is pronounced; but, unwilling to disperse, the whole assemblage stand "gaping and staring" on the preacher "with the most profound astonishment;" when, to his own relief, as well as theirs, he announces, "If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach again."

At the appointed hour, a still larger concourse of people covered the hill,—now densely built upon, but then an open space,—"from the top to the bottom;" more in number, as a congregation, than Mr. Wesley had heretofore seen, either in Moorfields, London, or on the Common at Kennington, where Mr. Whitefield and he had frequently preached to immense multitudes. Though unable to reach them all with his voice, he stood so as to have the whole at least in view, as he expounded the cheering declaration given in Hosea: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." "After preaching," Mr. Wesley records, "the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. It was some time before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came; but several were got to our inn before me, by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them at least a few days, or, however, one day more. But I could not consent, having given my word to be at Birstal, with God's leave, on Tuesday night."

Some of those who strongly "importuned" Mr. Wesley to remain were members of a religious society which had subsisted in Newcastle for many years; though, as to their tenets and usages, no record is extant. From the statements then volunteered by some of their number, we

can scarcely regard them as having advanced beyond the sphere of religious externalism. They "had gone on," according to their own testimony, "in a prudent, regular manner," and were "well spoken of by all men;" unconscious, it would seem, of any "woe" denounced against such. The observation of the stranger, after listening to their statements, was at once fitting and admonitory: "How many of the publicans and harlots will go into the kingdom of heaven before these!"

Great and general excitement was produced by Mr. Wesley's unexpected visit. Various conjectures were quickly rife, as to the character of the preacher, and the object of his coming. The seriously-disposed of other churches, who had hitherto rested in the form of godliness, heard strange tidings—doctrines to them altogether new; yet awakening serious thought, and almost leading them to call in question the faith in which they had been brought up. Among the masses of the openly abandoned and profane, many listened with intense interest, and not a few with susceptible and obedient hearts, to the announcement for the first time heard, that men might know their sins forgiven; that, through Him who was "wounded for their transgressions," pardon might be gained, and holiness, and heaven. "The thing," writes Christopher Hopper, (subsequently an eminent and useful minister of the Body,) "made a huge noise. Few, if any, could tell the motive on which he came, or the end he had in view. He made a short blaze, soon disappeared, and left us in great consternation."

Nor was the excitement lessened, but greatly increased, by the visit of Mr. Charles Wesley, accompanied by Mr. Greaves, some months after; when for several weeks he laboured with great success in Newcastle and its immediate vicinity. Soon after his arrival, he preached at Tanfield-Cross, to a large auditory, "some gaping, some laughing, some weeping." Mr. Hopper, who was pre-

sent, states : "I wondered what this could mean. When he had concluded, some said, 'He is a good man, and is sent to reform our land.' Others said, 'Nay, he is come to pervert and deceive us, and we ought to drive him from our coasts.'" No record is found of this northern visit, either in his Life, or published Journal ; yet, from other sources we learn that the power of God in a remarkable manner accompanied his zealous and awakening promulgation of Gospel truth. Hundreds, roused to a sense of their need of salvation, and earnestly desiring to "flee from the wrath to come," were united in religious fellowship, as the first Methodist Society in the north.

A sermon preached by Mr. Charles Wesley at Ryton, on the parable of the Great Supper, was more than ordinarily accompanied by "the demonstration of the Spirit." Among those who were then led to consider their ways, and with true contrition to devote themselves to God, were Robert Fairlamb and Jonathan Simpson ; whose cases may be taken as illustrative of results often produced in that day.

Fairlamb was then in his seventeenth year ; and, with Hopper, heretofore his associate in sin and folly, was led from sheer curiosity to the spot. The sight of Wesley greatly affected him ; and, under the sermon, such was the sense of guilt with which he was seized, that, heedless of those around him, he was led there and then to cry out, "What must I do to be saved ?" All his sins were placed in sorrowful array before him, and for some months he had little or no rest either day or night. He felt himself unfit for heaven, and unprepared to die. The remembrance of broken resolutions, vows unheeded, and a sad career, notwithstanding his youth, of open profanity and vice, often led him in agony of spirit to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me ?" In May, 1743, in compliance with an invitation given by Mr. Meyrick, after preaching at Low-Spen, near Ryton,

Hopper and Fairlamb, with others, gave in their names as desirous of "helping each other forward in the way to heaven;" and soon after, while they were pleading in deep distress before God, in the open field, the cry of the latter was heard, and his sorrow turned into joy. His Christian fidelity was soon severely tested. By an ungodly father he was threatened, flogged, and at last driven from the parental roof; yet in him was verified the word,— "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." For sixty-nine years he remained a constant member of the Methodist Society; his life being that of a Christian, his death the triumph of a saint. One who knew him well bears testimony, that "his honesty and integrity, his upright life and conversation, would have been no discredit even to the apostolic age."

Jonathan Simpson and his excellent wife were members of a Presbyterian church at Horsley; persons of unblemished reputation, and, according to the light they had, serving God. Under the sermon at Ryton, they were made aware of privileges to be enjoyed, to which they had heretofore been altogether strangers; and searching diligently the Scriptures, whether the things they heard were so or not, they were awakened to a sorrowful conviction that with all their profession, and notwithstanding their conscientious observance of the ordinances of religion, they were not Christians! On their inquiring of their minister, "whetlier they might know that God for Christ's sake had pardoned all their sins;" he went so far as to admit, that "some did so;" and, taking from hence encouragement, they sought by fasting and prayer this Christian privilege. "According to their faith" it was done unto them. "We could now say," writes Mrs. Simpson, "'Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and we will tell you what He hath done for our souls. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.'" In the

simplicity and freshness of her religious feelings, she stated to her friends the pleasing change which had taken place; but to her great surprise found they were as persons who heard not: her experience appeared to them a strange thing, and one unheard of. Their minister, also, was equally incredulous.

On the Sunday following, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be administered; but, (strange to say,) for the simple reason that they professed to know their sins forgiven, they were not permitted to unite in that memorial of Him whose blood was shed to take away our sins! Simpson, moreover, having, as precentor of the congregation, sung with more than ordinary zest and heartiness, the elders were offended at this also, and dismissed him from his office. In so serious a light was the heresy regarded, which had thus been introduced, that a special meeting of the minister and elders was deemed imperative to consider and decide thereon. The court, if such it may be termed, being duly formed, Simpson was interrogated,—“ Do you hold the same principles now, as you did before you heard those people ? ” In reply, with the Bible in his hand, he declared his readiness, not only to state what tenets he held, but also to prove the same from Scripture. The minister objected, that this was but evading the point before them. Simpson replied, that, unless they allowed him to state his whole case, he should give no answer at all. After some hesitation, he was permitted to proceed; when, on his declaring with all simplicity and frankness “ what God had done for his soul,” the minister, and some of the elders gravely proposed his excommunication; but, the meeting being divided in judgment, no decision was reached. Thus, in effect, repudiated by the church of their early choice, they joined the “ sect ” then “ every where spoken against ; ” and, to the close of their earthly pilgrimage, they were consistent and devoted members of the Methodist Society.

Mr. Charles Wesley, on this his first visit to Newcastle, was accompanied also by Matthew Errington, a native of Houghton-le-Spring, and subsequently for nearly forty years an inmate of the Orphan-House, Newcastle. Of this good man a short account may here be given, though by anticipating the order of time. Removing in early life to London, he was induced on the National Fast-day, February 4th, 1741, to attend the early service at the Foundery; when, on hearing Mr. Wesley preach on the awakening words,—“Shall not I visit for these things? saith the Lord; shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?”—he saw the evil of his heart as he had never done before. At ten o'clock that morning, he worshipped elsewhere, but met with nothing suited to his case. At one, he was again at the Foundery, at which hour Mr. Wesley had appointed a special meeting to be held for intercession and prayer; but, finding the house overflowing with people, he changed his purpose, and expounded the parable of the Barren Fig-tree. Matthew, though from childhood restrained by preventing grace from outward sin, and careful to preserve the form of godliness, was under this sermon shorn of that in which he trusted, and given to feel that he had been a cumberer of the ground, not simply for three years, but for more than twenty. So great was the mental wretchedness induced, that he was constrained, under the word, to cry out for mercy. Hearing that Mr. Wesley would preach that evening at Deptford, he, in his eagerness to obtain deliverance, walked thither without breaking his fast, “praying all the way as he went along.” While he listened to the message of mercy then proclaimed, his burden of condemnation was removed, and his spirit filled with peace and joy. So joyously was the transition felt, that, although he had fasted all the day, the want of food was scarcely apprehended. His subsequent deportment evidenced the reality of the change: he at once joined the

Society at the Foundery, and afterwards constantly attended the religious services held there.

At Mr. Wesley's request, he gave up the situation he then occupied, "where his wages and perquisites were very considerable," and removed to the Foundery, "to rise at four in the morning, call the preachers, clean their shoes, and mend their clothes, for a little plain food and raiment;" acting thus in the spirit of the Psalmist's declaration,—"I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

After having, at Newcastle, witnessed with joy the spread of the truth under Mr. Charles Wesley's faithful ministrations, he set off *on foot*, with Mr. Thomas Meyrick, one of Mr. Wesley's earliest "helpers," (who, however, afterwards received episcopal ordination,) for Cornwall; "in which journey he suffered much, partly from weariness, and partly from hunger and thirst." Sometimes he was in imminent danger of his life from violent mobs: once especially, when "some were for killing him at once," he only escaped martyrdom by wading through water up to the breast. "After some time, having spent all his money, worn out his clothes, and suffered much in body, he returned to London;" whence, on recruiting his finances, he came back to Newcastle in the year 1749, and resided in the Orphan-House till the day of his death. He was eminently a man of peace, "labouring to heal every breach," and promoting brotherly love to the utmost of his power; yet, at the same time, a faithful reprobate of sin,* and zealous in the service of his heavenly Master. In his last affliction he suffered much; but "patience" had

* One day, as he was walking on the Sandhill, a few gentlemen were conversing together, one of whom swore very freely. Matthew went up, and mildly reproved him. The gentleman turned short upon him, and said, "You should have called me aside, and not have spoken to me thus before company." "Sir," said Matthew, "you did not step aside to swear."

its "perfect work." With the petition on his lips, "Come, Lord Jesus ; come quickly," he entered into rest.

Toward the close of the year 1742, Mr. Wesley pays a second visit to the north, reaching Newcastle on Saturday the 13th of November, his brother Charles returning to London a few days before his arrival. His stay on this occasion being prolonged for some weeks, Newcastle and its neighbourhood were privileged for upwards of three months with the continuous ministrations of these devoted and honoured men ; whilst, in the steps then taken toward the erection of "the Orphan-House," the foundation was laid of yet more extended and permanent success.

Mr. Wesley's chief and first solicitude is directed to the Society which under his brother's ministry and care had been gathered together. On the evening of his arrival, they are summoned to meet him ; but, so many strangers being present, who could not be persuaded to retire, his purpose of specially addressing them was defeated, and the hour was spent in prayer. The demeanour of the newly-gathered flock must, in this brief interview, have been somewhat singular ; since, on referring to his Journal, we find him designating them "a wild, staring, loving Society." The place of their meeting was, in all likelihood, "the Room," situate in Lisle-street, opposite the site of the Orphan-House, which had been hired for their use. Here, on the morning following, about five o'clock,—an hour of service hitherto unheard of in that locality, and hence exciting great surprise,—Mr. Wesley preaches on the text, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance ;" and "the victorious sweetness of the grace of God" is "present with His word." At ten, with numbers of his flock, he is found at All-Saints' church, swelling greatly the number of the communicants there. In the afternoon, at four, he preaches in the large square of the Keelmen's Hospital, a little above Sandgate, an

enclosure, surrounded by the dwellings of the keelmen, and giving standing-room to several thousands of persons. At six he meets the Society, exhorting all who had "set their hand to the plough" not to "look back." Such were the engagements of the day of rest; and so of his subsequent Sabbaths in the north.

The afternoon of each day during the week is spent by Mr. Wesley in speaking "severally with the members of the Society:" a task most arduous; their numbers having increased, during his visit, to upwards of eight hundred, "beside many both in the towns, villages, and lone houses, within ten or twelve miles" of Newcastle. The step thus taken pleasingly illustrates the character of Wesley as a "wise master-builder" of the church. Not content with the simple promulgation of Divine truth, and with gathering into outward fellowship those who purposed to devote themselves to God, he institutes minute and searching inquiries as to their individual state and character. Some are found walking disorderly, and receive reproof. The greater number appear to have been but partially awakened; few being thoroughly convinced of sin, and still fewer being able to witness that "the Lamb of God had taken away their sins." Under the ministrations which followed,—ministrations designedly adapted, whilst strengthening their convictions, to unfold the way and manner in which God through Christ is pleased to save man,—many were enabled to testify that the Lord is "merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin."

The outward manifestations which attended this work were, in many instances, singular, and not easy to be accounted for by reference to merely physical causes. One individual, Margaret H—, was suddenly deprived of sight, and suffered for a season the total loss of muscular energy; whilst, "at the same time the love of God so overflowed her soul, that she could neither speak nor

move." Others trembled exceedingly; some fell down as dead; others roared aloud from disquietude of soul. Nor were open sinners alone thus affected; "the very best people, so called," being in many instances as deeply agitated as they. "Some," writes Mr. Wesley, "I found, could give no account at all, how or wherefore they had done so, only that of a sudden they dropped down, they knew not how; and what they afterwards said or did they knew not. Others could just remember they were in fear, but could not tell what they were in fear of. Several said, they were afraid of the devil, and this was all they knew. But a few gave a more intelligible account of the piercing sense they had of their sins, both inward and outward, which were set in array against them round about; of the dread they were in of the wrath of God, and the punishment they had deserved, into which they seemed to be just falling without any way to escape." "What wisdom," inquires he, "is that which rebuketh these, that they should hold their peace?" These singular occurrences, however, must be regarded as the exceptional results of the preaching of the word. In the overwhelming majority of instances, "the work of God was evenly and gradually carried on." "It continually rises," observes Mr. Wesley, "step by step. Not so much seems to be done at any one time, as had frequently been at Bristol, or London; but something at every time. It is the same with particular souls: I saw none in that triumph of faith which has been so common in other places; but the believers go on, calm and steady. Let God do as seemeth Him good."

The truth which saves was at this period preached in several of the neighbouring villages, and with various results. At Whickham, on Friday, November 26th, "rough words" were spoken; but the people were "exceeding quiet," only kept from falling asleep by the excessive cold. At Tanfield-Leigh, the Sunday following, Mr. Wesley ex-

pounds to a large company the former part of the fifth chapter to the Romans. "So dead, unaffected a congregation," he writes, "have I scarce seen, except at Whickham. Whether the gospel, or law, or English, or Greek, seemed all one to them. Yet the seed sown even here was not quite lost; for on Thursday morning, between four and five, John Brown, then of Tanfield-Leigh, was waked out of sleep by the voice that waketh the dead; and, ever since, he has been full of love and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Whether from aberration of mind, or the influence of powerful temptation, this plain farmer manifests, in the course of a few days, what Mr. Wesley terms "a genuine instance of enthusiasm." Riding through Newcastle, "hallooing and shouting," he drives all the people before him, "telling them God had told him he should be a king, and should tread all his enemies under his feet." Whatever may have been the cause of this erratic movement, Mr. Wesley prescribes the only rational and effectual remedy; sending him home immediately to his work, and counselling him "to cry day and night to God, that he might be lowly in heart; lest Satan should again get an advantage over him." Horsley and Swalwell are also visited by Mr. Wesley; where, in spite of wind and frost, he preaches in the open air. The service at the latter place is thus referred to:—"The wind was high, and extremely sharp; but I saw none go away till I went. Yet I observed none that seemed to be much convinced; only stunned as if cut in the head."

The most important points secured by Mr. Wesley's protracted visit were, the purchase of land outside the Pilgrim-street Gate, Newcastle, for the erection of the Orphan-House, and the commencement of the building under his immediate supervision. The following extracts from his Journal furnish our only information as to the successive steps then taken:—

“Wednesday, December 1st.—We had several places offered on which to build a room for the Society; but none was such as we wanted. And perhaps there was a Providence in our not finding any as yet; for by this means I was kept at Newcastle, whether I would or no.”

“Saturday, 4th.—To-day a gentleman, Mr. Riddell, called, and offered me a piece of ground. On Monday an article was drawn, wherein he agreed to put me into possession on Thursday, upon payment of thirty pounds.”

“Tuesday, 7th.—I was so ill in the morning, that I was obliged to send Mr. Williams to the room. He afterwards went to Mr. Stephenson, a merchant in the town, who had a passage through the ground we intended to buy. I was willing to purchase it. Mr. Stephenson told him, ‘Sir, I do not want money; but if Mr. Wesley wants ground, he may have a piece of my garden, adjoining the place you mention. I am at a word. For forty pounds he shall have sixteen yards in breadth, and thirty in length.’”

“Wednesday, 8th.—Mr. Stephenson and I signed an article, and I took possession of the ground. But I could not fairly go back from my agreement with Mr. Riddell. So I entered on his ground at the same time. The whole is about forty yards in length; in the middle of which we determined to build the house, leaving room for a court-yard before, and a little garden behind the building.”

“Monday, 13th.—I removed into a lodging adjoining the ground where we intended to build; but the violent frost obliged us to delay the work. I never felt so intense cold before. In a room where a constant fire was kept, though my desk was fixed within a yard of the chimney, I could not write for a quarter of an hour together, without my hands being quite benumbed.”

“Monday, 20th.—We laid the first stone of the House. Many were gathered from all parts to see it; but none scoffed or interrupted, while we praised God, and prayed that He would prosper the work of our hands

upon us. Three or four times in the evening I was forced to break off preaching, that we might pray and give thanks to God."

"Thursday, 23d.—It being computed that such a House as we proposed could not be finished under seven hundred pounds, many were positive it would never be finished at all; others, that I should not live to see it covered. I was of another mind,—nothing doubting, but, as it was begun for God's sake, He would provide what was needful for the finishing it."

The Thursday following, Mr. Wesley, after preaching in the forenoon a farewell sermon in the Hospital-square, to a larger congregation than had previously been seen there, journeys southward. The service is protracted from eleven to one o'clock; and, even then, not without difficulty could he get away; men, women, and children so hanging upon him. And when at length he took horse, "a muckle woman," as one in anger termed her, "kept her hold, and ran by the horse's side down to Sandgate."

Three months after, the building was so far advanced, that on the evening of Friday, March 25th, 1743, Mr. Wesley preached a kind of opening sermon "in the shell of the new House," on the subject of "the Rich Man and Lazarus," and afterwards held a watchnight. "A great multitude" assembled on the occasion; but no record is found of any collection then made.

The woodcut-illustration of this ancient House* is interesting, not only as a remembrancer of the *second* preaching-house erected by the venerated Wesley, but as furnishing a striking contrast to the architecturally-correct and stately structures of the present day. The first chapel in Methodism was erected by Mr. Wesley, in the Horse-Fair, Bristol, during the year 1739; the foundation-stone being laid by him on Saturday, May 12th. "The Foundery," in Moorfields, London, purchased on

* See Frontispiece.

lease some months after, was the second edifice thus occupied. The third place appropriated for Methodistic worship, being the second in order of erection, was the Orphan-House, Newcastle.

The lower part of the "House" was the chapel, fitted up with pulpit and forms; the men and women sitting apart. Galleries were subsequently erected; the entrance to which, in 1790, was by a broad staircase on the outside, commencing at the left corner of the space in front, and leading to the covered way above, as shown in the woodcut. Above the chapel was a large compartment lighted from behind, the centre of which was used as a band-room; opening from which, on either side, were several class-rooms for the use of the Society. On the highest story—a kind of Scotch "flat"—were suites of apartments, subsequently appropriated for the residence of the preachers and their families; while on the roof was a wooden erection,* about eleven feet square, with tiled covering, generally known as "Mr. Wesley's study." A narrow staircase, little more than two feet wide, led from the preachers' dwelling below, to a small floor in the actual roof of the building, opening from which was the doorway to the study. This apartment, even in the tidiest days of the Orphan-House, must have been of the most homely description. The fire-place (the grate of which is still preserved) would, in this day, be repudiated by the most humble cottager. In strict keeping with it were the door and furniture of the room. Its exposure to the wintry blasts of the north would also render it an undesirable retreat for any to whom warmth and comfort were matters of moment. Such, however, was the apartment

* On taking down the old Orphan-House, (1857,) the *materiel* of this study was carefully preserved; and it was afterwards sold, for the benefit of the School-Bazaar fund, to Solomon Mease, Esq., Cleveland-House, North Shields; in whose grounds the study has been re-erected, as far as possible, in its original form.



MR. WESLEY'S ORPHAN-HOUSE STUDY.

In the above woodcut-illustration, taken from a painting in the possession of John B. Falconar, Esq., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the letter S denotes the narrow staircase, leading from the preachers' apartments below, to a small floor in the roof of the building ; the letter D, the entrance to the study.

designed and appropriated by the self-denying Wesley for his special residence when sojourning in Newcastle. Here, at different periods, much of his valuable time was spent: here also, as various intimations in his Journal show, he loved to be. Take for instance the following:— “ Newcastle, Wednesday, June 23d, 1779. I rested here. Lovely place, and lovely company! But I believe there is another world. Therefore, I must arise and go hence.” On Friday, June 4th, 1790, (only eight months before his removal to the house above,) he writes: “ We reached Newcastle. In this and Kingswood House, were I to do my own will, I should choose to spend the short remainder of my days. But it cannot be: this is not my rest.”

Several interesting incidents may be connected with the study of the Orphan-House. Here, in part at least, was written the correspondence with Dr. Thomas Secker, then Bishop of Oxford, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, who, under the assumed name of John Smith, controverted Mr. Wesley’s views on some of the most important points of evangelical truth. Here, in 1748, Mr. Wesley formed the purpose of publishing, “ in three-score or fourscore volumes, all that is most valuable in the English tongue, in order to provide a complete Library to all that fear God.” His “ Instructions for Children,” and his second Letter to the Bishop of Exeter, (written in refutation of various slanders on Methodism, in which his lordship had indulged,) with much of his instructive correspondence, are dated from Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

One or two circumstances connected with the erection of the Orphan-House are well deserving record here. The fear expressed by some, that, as seven hundred pounds would be requisite for its completion, “ it would never be finished at all,” was not, perhaps, without foundation. The building was commenced as a matter of imperative necessity; the large numbers associated in religious fellow-

ship requiring some such erection. No funds, however, were in hand ; nor does it appear that any effort in the way of general subscription was then made. Yet, notwithstanding, the building progressed ; trust being placed in God, that what was “needful for the finishing of it” would be forthcoming. And here, as in the erection of the celebrated Orphan-House at Halle, in Saxony, by Professor Francke, that confidence was not misplaced. In addition to £50, collected after a “rough charity sermon,” preached by Mr. Wesley at the Foundery, a pious Quaker, whilst the building was in progress, forwarded £100, accompanied by the following letter :—

“ FRIEND WESLEY,

“ I HAVE had a dream concerning thee. I thought I saw thee surrounded by a large flock of sheep, which thou didst not know what to do with. The first thought after I awoke was, that it was thy flock at Newcastle, and that thou hadst no house for them. I have enclosed a note for £100, which may help thee to build thee a house.”

This munificent donation was most opportune ; Mr. Wesley, in the exuberant kindness of his spirit, having just advanced to a member in distress the money he had brought with him to Newcastle, to pay the workmen ; trusting in Providence for a further supply.*

The Rev. Mr. Turner, then Vicar of Newcastle, had also his dream ; which, if not equally productive as to finan-

* “ Mr. Thomas Dixon,” the preacher who accompanied Mr. Wesley on this occasion, ventured to remonstrate, and “expressed his concern lest inconvenience should ensue, when application was made for the money, and none should be forthcoming. On the Saturday following, an unexpected supply of the sum of £100 (supposed to have been the Quaker’s donation) was received by Mr. Wesley, by post ; upon which he said to Mr. Dixon, ‘O ! Tommy, where was your faith ?’ Mr. Dixon himself related the above to Mr. Honeyman, an aged Methodist, now (A. D. 1843) living.”—*Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, 1843, p. 548.

cial results, was yet indicative of what is of infinitely higher moment,—the continuous promulgation of gospel truth, and the restoration, through this Divinely appointed agency, of successive generations to fellowship with God. Passing by the site soon after the commencement of the building, and learning that a preaching-house for Mr. Wesley was there in course of erection, the vicar expressed his pleasure and surprise; stating that a few nights before, when “deep sleep” was on him, he had seen in a vision “angels ascending and descending on a ladder, on that very spot.” Regarding his dream as thus fulfilled, he, in the kindness of his spirit, gave utterance to an earnest wish and hope, that the services there held might issue in the awakening and salvation of many. A wish this, in after days, pleasingly realized. No sin of presumption will be committed, when, in language of holy writ, we venture to assert, “The Lord shall count, when He writeth up the people, that this man was born there.”

Others, however, regarded Mr. Wesley and his movements with far less friendly feelings. One clergyman of Newcastle published a pamphlet anonymously, during the year following, entitled, “The Notions of the Methodists disproved, by setting the Doctrine of the Church of England concerning Justification and Regeneration in a true Light.” After allowing that Mr. Wesley was one “of strict life, and in all appearance of mortified temper,” he charges him “with compassing sea and land to make proselytes,”—with making “unwarrantable dissensions in the Church,” “prejudicing the people wherever he comes against the clergy, and the doctrine they teach;” and strongly insists that Mr. Wesley and his clerical helpers could not be friends to the Church, inasmuch as they did not obey its governors, and submit themselves, as at their ordination they promised, to all their “godly admonitions and injunctions.” He then gives what he terms the true

doctrine of the Church as to the points at issue, and attempts to fix on Mr. Wesley the charge of "avowedly transgressing the laws both of the Church and State," and of being "guilty both of schism and rebellion; two very grievous and damnable sins." To all this, Mr. Wesley, in his "Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," merely replies: "I have read, and believe it quite needless to take any further notice of, this performance; the writer being so utterly unacquainted with the merits of the cause, and showing himself so perfectly a stranger both to my life, preaching, and writing, and to the word of God, and to the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England."

This calls forth from his clerical censor a second pamphlet, bearing the title, "The Notions of the Methodists further disproved; in Answer to their Earnest Appeal, &c.; with a Vindication of the Church of England from their Aspersions." In this the author expresses surprise that his former production should have been so contemptuously dismissed; and, after indulging in several grossly personal remarks, seeks to subvert the reasoning of his opponent. To this Mr. Wesley replies at some length in his "Farther Appeal," simply premising,— "So much as relates to the merits of the case, I will endeavour to consider calmly. As to what is *personal*, I leave it as it is. 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"

By Deed,* bearing date March 5th, 1745, the Orphan-House property was vested by Mr. Wesley in the following persons as trustees:—Henry Jackson, Newcastle, weaver; William Mackford, Newcastle, cornfactor; John Nelson, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, Jonathan Reeves, then "assistants" in connexion with Mr. Wesley; and Henry Thornton, solicitor, London.

The provisions of the Deed clearly show, that at that period Mr. Wesley had not the remotest idea of forming

* A verbatim copy of the Deed is given in Appendix A.

any society, or religious organization, separate from the Church of which he was a minister. It was not till after the erection of the Orphan-House, that any Conference was held; nor is any reference to Methodism or its people given in the Deed. The purposes in view appear to have been, to fix a centre for evangelical effort in the northern districts; to secure a home for his itinerant "helpers" in the work of the ministry; and, as Providence might open his way, to give instruction to the children of the destitute poor. The semi-conventual arrangements of the place might, indeed, have been designed for the residence and support of certain widows and orphans; but in the Deed, no reference whatever is made to persons of this class.

The trustees were by the Deed placed under obligation to allow Mr. Wesley, and, after his death, his brother Charles, to nominate and appoint the preachers of the Orphan-House, as well as to have the general jurisdiction of the place; and, on their decease, the trustees, or a majority of them, were to "nominate and appoint monthly, or oftener, one or more fit person or persons to preach and expound God's holy word in the said House, in the same manner, as near as may be, as God's holy word" was then "preached and expounded there." A school was also to be kept up, to "consist of one master and one mistress, and such forty poor children" as the Wesleys, and, after their death, the trustees, might appoint. The preacher or minister appointed, "so long as he shall continue in his said office," is to "preach twice every day; to wit, in the morning and again in the evening, in or at the House aforesaid, as has been usual and customary to be done." No provision was made, in the Deed, for the sale, or mortgaging, or transfer of the premises; none for the salary of the master or mistress, or the sustenance of the schools: nor is any evidence forthcoming, that such schools were ever instituted during the lifetime of Wesley, or since his death. From the

defectiveness of the Deed, as well as the singularity of its provisions, many difficulties subsequently arose.

The delay in vesting the property in trustees was occasioned mainly by the hesitancy of Mr. Stephenson,* of whom part of the land was purchased, to execute the necessary deed of transfer. Not till upwards of two years after Mr. Wesley had taken possession of the land, and proceeded with the building, was this done. The following characteristic letter,† though without date, was evidently written about this period :—

“ SIR,

“ I AM surprised. You give it under your hand, that you will put me in possession of a piece of ground, specified in an article between us, in fifteen days’

* It is an interesting coincidence, that some of the descendants of this gentleman (who, though at first promptly offering land to Mr. Wesley, was subsequently far from friendly to the Methodistic movement) are now highly-respected and influential members of Society in the Newcastle Circuit. Miss Nixon, of Barlow,—whose father frequently entertained Mr. Wesley, and opened his house for some of the religious services,—was united in marriage with a grandson of the above. Their eldest son, William Stephenson, Esq., of Throckley-House, near Newcastle, has for many years been the leader of the Throckley Society; and more than once has sustained with honour the responsible office of Circuit-steward. The chapel at Throckley was erected by him; and to the building-fund of “the Orphan-House schools” he was one of the most liberal contributors. His second son, William Haswell, is a highly-acceptable and useful local preacher.

Whilst these pages were preparing for the press, Elizabeth, the beloved and faithful wife of Mr. Stephenson, exchanged mortality for life. Firm and unwavering in her religious profession,—a safe counsellor,—the stay and exemplar of a large family, by all of whom her restraining yet genial influence was happily felt,—she sustained for upwards of forty years the Christian character. Of her it may be truly said, “She looked well to the ways of her household, and ate not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.” On the morning of Tuesday, August 5th, 1862, she was suddenly summoned to the inheritance above.

† Southey’s Life of Wesley, vol. i., p. 362.

time. Three months are passed, and that article is not fulfilled. And now you say you can't conceive what I mean by troubling you. I mean to have that article fulfilled. I think my meaning is very plain.

“I am, Sir,

“Your humble servant,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

Nor was this plain dealing without its effect. “Saturday, April 6th, 1745,” Mr. Wesley writes: “Mr. Stephenson, of whom I bought the ground on which our House is built, came at length, after delaying it more than two years, and executed the writing. So I am freed from one more care. May I in everything make known my request to God!”

As to other circumstances attendant on the erection of this ancient House, the cost of the building, or the debt which, after settling with the builder, still remained, we have no sources of adequate information. That some liability rested on its projector, is suggested by the fact, that in 1771, on the distribution of certain moneys in extinction of the “debt for building” incurred by the Connexion at large, the sum of £75. 1s. 3d. was appropriated to Newcastle, in liquidation or extinction of the Orphan-House debt. Still, the whole effort—especially when the current expenses of the House, including the support of the widows from time to time residing there, the salary of the housekeeper, and the shelter and maintenance of many a weather-beaten herald of the Cross, are glanced at—may be viewed as one of religious daring, and, perhaps, only justified by the confident persuasion that the whole was of God.

It seems more than probable, that, although in the Orphan-House Deed reference is simply made to the instruction of “poor children” as part of the original design, Mr. Wesley had in view the establishment, though

on a smaller scale, of an institution similar to the one at Halle: hence the name given from the very outset of the undertaking. In one interesting point the steps of Mr. Wesley were strictly in unison with those of Professor Francke,—the confident reliance placed on God, that the means necessary for the completion of the building would be forthcoming. When the foundation of the Orphan-House was laid at Halle, in July, 1698, its founder states, he had “not as much money as would erect a small house, much less a large hospital;” yet “in singleness of heart, and in entire dependence upon God,” he proceeded. “Week by week,” the requisite supplies, often from very unexpected sources, flowed in. “The building ran up amain,” and in the space of one year was ready for the roof; whilst, soon after its opening, the number of students and children, with necessary officers, was upwards of two hundred.

Mr. Wesley’s purpose as to the establishment of a school for orphans, or others, proved a failure, either from want of funds, or the lack of suitable agents: yet, in all other respects, the objects originally contemplated were successfully carried out. One writing from another standpoint than our own, in an interesting article, headed, “The Orphan-House and its Associations,” states the matter correctly:—“The erection of the Orphan-House,* —the quaint old building which afterwards became one of the landmarks, not only of evangelism, but of civilization, in the north of England,—did for Newcastle that which the rise of a spring does for the desert. That supply of fresh and living water is just what the desert needs to reclaim it. On its brink the seeds of vegetation settle; the sand is gradually overgrown, or beaten back; the palm-tree grows to overshadow the fountain, and it becomes the resting-place of every passer-by. Other springs, no doubt, as well as that of Methodism, have

* Northern Daily Express; Friday, May 15th, 1857.

helped to neutralize the aridity of the last century, and to cover the face of modern society with freshness, and purity, and beauty. And the greatness of the change effected can only be realized in proportion to the vividness with which we realize the spiritual condition of England a hundred years ago. The Church of England, as she existed throughout the earlier part of the eighteenth century, presents an almost unbroken stretch of stagnor, scarcely redeemed by a single ripple denoting that the Spirit had ever 'moved on the face of the waters;' scarcely redeemed by a single growth denoting the presence of vitality. Nor did Dissent escape the prevailing lethargy. John Wesley, in many places, found his chief opponents in the ranks of Dissenters; for Church and Dissent, agreeing in nothing else, agreed in cherishing an instinctive horror of innovation. It was precisely to break this stagnor that Methodism burst into light. Let us hope, that, although the old building, to which so many interesting memorials clung, has given way to one which will be more in keeping with the necessities of education, the mystic ladder, which Vicar Turner dreamed of, may still be found in the old place; and that the Orphan-House will still be the medium of conveying humanizing influences into the social atmosphere around it."

CHAPTER II.

1743.

Centres of Wesleyan effort—Origin of class-meetings—Lay helpers—Examination of the Orphan-House Society—Repeated outward manifestations—Withdrawals and expulsions from the Society—Wesley preaches at Chowden-Fell, South-Biddick, and Plessey—Cases of bodily excitement scrutinized by Charles Wesley—Preaching at Sunderland and Shields—First lovefeast held in Newcastle—The mob in Sandgate—Low-Spen Society organized—John Brown—Christopher Hopper—Jonathan Reeves—Thomas Meyrick—Grace Murray.

DURING the erection of the Orphan-House, the foundations of Methodism, as to its church-organization, were in course of being unostentatiously, yet surely, laid. London, Bristol, and Newcastle were at that period the centres of effort and enterprise. There extensive Societies had been formed, and various agents of usefulness raised up.

The “United Societies,” which took their rise in 1739, consisted of persons who, having obtained the “knowledge of the truth” under the ministrations of the Wesleys and their “helpers,” had placed themselves under Mr. Wesley’s immediate pastoral care; on whom, till their organization into classes, an immense burden of anxiety and care was necessarily imposed.

This great event, tending as it certainly did, more than any prior or subsequent step, to the consolidation and permanency of the Methodist fabric, appears to have been the result of circumstances, rather than of design. In this, as in the step-by-step formation of our ecclesiastical system, we recognise the intervention of a more than human superintendency. The class-meetings of Methodism are its church-bond of union; scriptural in their

basis, and in the highest degree promotive of a true Christian fellowship; necessary, too, it would almost seem, to the successful carrying out of the apostolical injunction,—“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.”

Mr. Wesley, after dwelling upon several inconveniences and evils which had arisen from the want of religious oversight and direction,—the Society in London alone numbering, at that day, upwards of a thousand members,—thus records the circumstances which led to the formation of this important branch of our church-economy: “At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have had cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the Society in Bristol, (15th February, 1742,) concerning the means of paying the debt there, when one stood up and said, ‘Let every member of the Society give a penny a week till all are paid.’* Another answered, ‘But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it.’ ‘Then,’ said he, ‘put eleven of the poorest with me, and, if they can give nothing, I will give for them, as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting.’ It was done. In a while, some of these informed me, they found such and such an one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately, ‘This is the very thing we have wanted so long.’ I called together all the Leaders of the classes,—so we used to term them and their companies,—and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were

* Little did this humble financier dream of the extent to which, in after years, this simple mode of doing good would be carried out. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are at this day annually raised for religious and benevolent purposes, by means of weekly, if not, indeed, of penny-a-week, subscriptions.

detected ; some turned from the evil of their ways ; some were put away from us." The calling weekly on the several contributors was ere long found to be a task too onerous for the Leaders, so designated, to perform ; and an hour was fixed for their meeting together, for the purposes just named. These little assemblies soon assumed a directly religious character ; and the class-organization of the Societies at large quickly followed. Classes in Newcastle are not spoken of till the spring of 1743.

Several zealous and devoted men, prompted by the all-constraining love of Christ to seek the salvation of others, were at this early period employed as "lay-helpers" in the important task of calling sinners to repentance. A step this, certainly not premeditated by Wesley, but rather in contravention of his Church-principles and procedure. Yet in this, as in other instances, where circumstances seemed to indicate *Divine* direction, he at once and hopefully concurred. In the list of those who, in 1742, were thus recognised and employed, are found the names of William Briggs, Alexander Coates, William Crouch, William Darney, John Hale, John Houghton, Thomas Hardwick, Samuel Larwood, Thomas Maxfield, John Maddern, Henry Millard, Thomas Meyrick, John Nelson, William Prior, Jonathan Reeves, Robert Swindells, David Taylor, Thomas Westall, Thomas Williams, James Wheatley, and Enoch Williams.* By the assistance thus gained, stated religious services were established among the Societies already formed, and new aggressive action was taken in places and neighbourhoods where "the prince of this world" held almost undisputed sway.

On the 19th of February, 1743, Mr. Wesley is again found at Newcastle ; where, for nearly two months, he is zealously engaged in building up the Societies, as well as in superintending the erection of the Orphan-House,

* Smith's History of Methodism, vol. i., p. 195.

recently begun. On Sunday, March 6th, he reads over in the Society certain Rules,* which, as he informed them, all associated with him were expected to observe ; and on the following day he commences a second scrutinizing examination of the members, now divided into classes : before which, in consequence of their disorderly walking, he had put away not less than *fifty* of their number ; still leaving upwards of eight hundred enrolled.

His attention, in this second visitation, was directed specially to two points ; namely, the case of those who were affected in an extraordinary manner under the religious services then held, and the reasons which had induced so large a number to withdraw from the newly-formed Society.

As on his former visit, many, though in perfect health, were, under the preaching of the word, singularly affected. Some were seized with violent pain, and, under the entire loss of physical energy, suddenly dropped down : others described their feelings, as though a sword were running through them, or a great weight pressed upon them, sinking them to the earth ; giving rise, in many instances, to piercing and alarming cries. After careful examination, Mr. Wesley reaches the conclusion,—“ These symptoms I

* These, which constituted the first edition of the Rules of “the United Societies,” had just been published by Mr. Wesley, under date of February 23d, 1743. An exact copy, for which I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Dr. Osborn, is inserted in Appendix B.

The peculiarities of this edition may be stated in a few words. The name of Mr. Wesley only is subscribed. Hence, in the concluding sentences, “ I ” is found instead of “ We,” as administering pastoral admonition and discipline. The contributions of the members are directed to be received for the relief of the poor. Family-prayer is not specifically enjoined ; whilst several of the paragraphs are differently arranged. “ A Prayer,” in eighteen stanzas, “ for those who are convinced of sin,” is also appended. A subsequent edition, similar to the one now in circulation, and bearing the signature of Charles as well as of John Wesley, is dated May 1st, 1743.

can no more impute to any natural cause, than to the Spirit of God. I can make no doubt, but that it was Satan tearing them as they were coming to Christ. And hence proceeded those grievous cries, whereby he might design both to discredit the work of God, and to affright fearful people from hearing that word whereby their souls might be saved."

This judgment Mr. Wesley in some measure qualified at a later period, when, referring to similar if not even more extraordinary manifestations, which occurred in the church at Everton, under the preaching of the Rev. John Berridge, he expresses his conviction that in many instances, the sudden outcries and strong bodily convulsions then witnessed were the natural result of "sudden and Divine convictions for sin;" that, "to strengthen and encourage those who believed, and to make His works more apparent," God favoured several with Divine dreams, others with trances and visions; but that in some instances "Satan was permitted to mimic this part of the work of God, in order to discredit the whole work." But he concludes, that "it is not wise to give up this part, any more than to give up the whole." The scenes of that time, as well as those which have recently taken place in the "sister isle," and those which, indeed, have more or less characterized religious revivals for centuries gone by, are, it may be, difficult of interpretation; while well consistent with the testimony of St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

As to the second subject of inquiry, Mr. Wesley writes: "The number of those who had left the Society since December 30th, I observed, was seventy-six. Fourteen of these, chiefly Dissenters, said, they left it because otherwise their ministers would not give them the sacra-

ment." (On inquiry it was found, that three of the Dissenting ministers of the town had agreed together to exclude from the holy communion all who would not refrain from hearing the Wesleys; one of them publicly affirming, that the Methodists were all Papists, and that their doctrine was mere Popery.)

"Nine more," the record proceeds, had left "because their husbands or wives were not willing they should stay in it.

"Twelve, because their parents were not willing.

"Five, because their master and mistress would not let them come.

"Seven, because their acquaintance persuaded them to leave it.

"Five, because people said such bad things of the Society.

"Nine, because they would not be laughed at.

"Three, because they would not lose the poor's allowance.

"Three more, because they could not spare time to come.

"Two, because it was too far off.

"One, because she was afraid of falling into fits.

"One, because people were so rude in the street.

"Two, because Thomas Naisbit was in the Society.

"One, because he would not turn his back on his baptism.

"One, because we were mere Church of England men: and

"One, because it was time enough to serve God yet.

"The number of those who were expelled the Society was sixty-four:—

"Two, for cursing and swearing.

"Two, for habitual Sabbath-breaking.

"Seventeen, for drunkenness.

"Two, for retailing spirituous liquors.

- “ Three, for quarrelling and brawling.
- “ One, for beating his wife.
- “ Three, for habitual, wilful lying.
- “ Four, for railing and evil-speaking.
- “ One, for idleness and laziness : and
- “ Nine-and-twenty, for lightness and carelessness.”

Such were the results of personal examination, in reference to not less than eight hundred individuals, who, for the sake of mutual religious edification, had associated themselves with the Founder of Methodism. The process of expulsion may appear, in our day, somewhat harsh and summary ; and in some instances, at least, the fault committed can scarcely be regarded as justifying the sentence. It must, however, be borne in mind, that Methodism at that period, and for years subsequently, had no direct church-organization. Its members were rather persons who, although connected with other churches, thankfully availed themselves of the new arrangement, as supplying a lack not otherwise met. “ A desire to flee from the wrath to come,” evidenced by a corresponding spirit and deportment, was the only term of membership. In all cases, therefore, where the condition was unfulfilled, the right to this particular fellowship necessarily ceased.

Three colliery-villages in the neighbourhood are visited, during this sojourn in the north, by Wesley. Chowden-Fell, where he is found on the 8th inst., is described as “ the Kingswood of the north.” On his arrival there, twenty or thirty children, who could not “ properly be said to be either clothed or naked,” run round him, wondering at the intrusion of beings so differently attired from those with whom they had to do. “ One of the largest”—a girl about fifteen—has nothing for clothing, but “ a piece of a ragged dirty blanket, some way hung about her, and a kind of cap on her head, of the same cloth and colour.” In painful keeping with this state of things, was the general character of the neighbourhood. The half-savagism of

the place excites the deepest sympathy of the preacher ; and, with enlargement of heart, he proceeds to announce, —“ Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.”

At South-Biddick, where he preached on the 20th of the month, a somewhat higher state of civilization presents itself. Standing “ at the bottom of a semicircular hill, on the rising sides of which many hundreds stood,” he cries to a deeply-attentive congregation, “ O ye dry bones, hear ye the word of the Lord.”

On Good Friday, April 1st, the “savage ignorance and wickedness” of the colliers at Plessey attract him thither. Their lawless habits had rendered them, indeed, a terror to the neighbourhood. The Sabbath was with them a season of special profanity and sin ; dancing and fighting, with games, altogether demoralizing in their tendency, filled up the sacred hours of the day. How great the charity that cared for outcasts such as these ! In spite of storm and cold,—a strong north wind driving the sleet in their face, which, freezing as it fell, soon “cased” them over,—Wesley and his companions wend their way. Reaching “the square,” he at once proclaims the lovingkindness of Him who “was wounded for our transgressions,” and “bruised for our iniquities.” The heretofore-neglected pitmen gather round, and give “earnest heed” to the things they hear. On the following Monday and Tuesday, Mr. Wesley preaches there again. “ And as most of these,” concludes he, “ had never in their lives pretended to any religion of any kind, they were the more ready to cry to God, as mere sinners, for the free redemption which is in Jesus.”

During the temporary absence of the Wesleys, care appears to have been taken to secure a regular supply of preaching, as well as a kind of pastoral oversight of the Societies in the north. Jonathan Reeves and Thomas Meyrick, two of

Mr. Wesley's earliest lay Helpers, are at this period found at Newcastle, preaching, and, as opportunity served, forming Societies in the neighbourhood.

Toward the end of May, Mr. Charles Wesley, having on his way thither had his "head stunned" by a fall from his horse, which, as he records, "spoiled his making hymns," (a practice in which he frequently indulged when on horseback,) reaches Newcastle, and on the evening of his arrival preaches in the room; "God giving testimony to the word of His grace." His attention, like that of his brother, was quickly and almost necessarily directed to the instances of bodily excitement, into which many of the new converts had been thrown, and repetitions of which were still witnessed. The elder Wesley, when dealing with cases of this kind, was hesitating and cautious; fearing to destroy, or to lessen, the good which was unquestionably produced. Charles was characteristically prompt and decided. That which did not appear to him immediately connected with the work of God, he at once discountenanced, and endeavoured to put down. As to the cases in question, he admits that many—doubtless, as the result of sudden and strong convictions—were "struck down, both soul and body, into the depths of distress:" yet, regarding these outward affections as liable to be counterfeited by mistaken or designing persons, he sets himself to detect and expose such impositions whenever presented. With what success he pursues this method, the following extract from his Journal shows:—"To-day, one who came from the ale-house, drunk, was pleased to fall into a fit for my entertainment, and beat himself heartily. I thought it a pity to hinder him: so, instead of singing over him, (as had often been done before,) we left him to recover at his leisure. A girl, as she began to cry, I ordered to be carried out. Her convulsion was so violent as to take away the use of her limbs, till they laid her without the door: then, immediately, she found her

legs, and walked off. Some very unstill sisters, who always took care to stand near me, and try which should cry loudest, since I had them removed out of my sight, have been as quiet as lambs. On the first night I preached here, half my words were lost through their outcries. Last night, before I began, I gave public notice, that whosoever cried so as to drown my voice should, without any man's hurt, or judging them, be gently carried to the farthest corner of the room. But my porters had no employment the whole night; yet the Lord was with us, mightily convincing of sin and righteousness."

Thursday, June 16th, Mr. Charles Wesley preaches at Sunderland to about "a thousand wild people." "Never," he remarks, "have I seen greater attention in any at their first hearing." Some weeks after, his brother preaches in the High-Street of that town. The assemblage is at first tumultuous; yet, on securing their attention, he explains without further interruption "the one true religion,—'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.'"

From Sunderland, Mr. Charles Wesley proceeds to Shields; and, amid much opposition and tumult, declares "the truth as it is in Jesus." "We rode to Shields," writes he. "I went to church, and the people followed in crowds after me. The minister could not be heard in reading prayers; but I heard him loud enough afterwards, calling for the churchwardens to quiet the disturbance which none but himself had raised. I fancy he thought I should preach there, like some of the first Quakers. The clerk came to me, bawling out, it was consecrated ground, and I had no business to preach on it; was no minister; &c. When he had cried himself out of breath, I whispered him in the ear, that I had no intention to preach there; and he stumbled upon a good saying,—'Sir, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, speak it to them without.'"

"I did so at my leisure; a huge multitude waiting in the churchyard; many of them fierce, and threatening to drown me, and what not. I walked quietly through the midst of them, and discoursed, in strong awakening words, on the jailer's question,—‘What must I do to be saved?’ The churchwardens and others laboured in vain to interrupt, by throwing dirt, nay, and money, among the people. Having delivered my message, I rode to the ferry, crossed, and met as rough friends on the other side. The mob of North-Shields waited to salute me, with the minister at their head. He had got a man with a horn, instead of a trumpet, and bade him blow, and his companions shout. Others were almost as violent in their approbation. We went through honour and dishonour, but neither of them hurt us; and by six, with God's blessing, came safe to Newcastle."* From such unpromising beginnings what glorious results have followed!

With the general state of the Orphan-House Society Mr. Charles appears to have been satisfied. Many back-sliders had during his visit been reclaimed; so that, when taking his leave, June 20th, it was a "hard parting with the Society." The first lovefeast held in Newcastle, it may be noted, had taken place the evening before. "Jesus was with His disciples."

The week following, Mr. Wesley succeeds his brother in the oversight of the northern Societies; but finds that, from various causes, only six hundred were now "striving together for the hope of the Gospel." A spirit of contention had unhappily prevailed, so that the minds of many had grown faint, whilst others had turned back. For the first time, also, open opposition now appears in Newcastle. During preaching in Sandgate, on Sunday, July 10th, when thousands upon thousands were crowding

* Jackson's Life of Charles Wesley, vol. i., pp. 335, 336.

together, "the prince of this world," Mr. Wesley records, "fought with all his might, lest his kingdom should be overthrown. Yet the very mob of Newcastle, in the height of their rudeness, have commonly some humanity left. I scarce observed," continues he, "that they threw anything at all; neither did I receive the least personal hurt. But they continued thrusting one another to and fro, and making such a noise that my voice could not be heard. So, after spending near an hour in singing and prayer, I thought it best to adjourn to our own House."

At Lower-Spen, on the 14th inst., (John Brown, of Tanfield-Leigh, having recently removed thither,) Mr. Wesley organizes the little Society which had been gathered together, appointing Christopher Hopper as the leader. The "plain farmer," an instance of whose "genuine enthusiasm" has been noted, appears to have profited greatly by the counsels then given. Truly consistent in his deportment, he is now, with greater discretion, zealous for God. Though somewhat rude in speech, and often using strong words, this worthy man bears an artless testimony to the truth, which is productive of much good; many of his neighbours being convinced of the error of their way, and led to seek salvation in the blood of Jesus. A church is quickly formed in his house; and there, at every opportunity, the truth which saves is faithfully proclaimed. Under his roof the heralds of the Cross, often weather-beaten and weary, find a home, and receive a farmer's welcome.*

CHRISTOPHER HOPPER, the Low-Spen leader, was sub-

* For upwards of sixty-five years Farmer Brown continued a devoted member of the Methodist Society. The last ten or eleven days of his mortal life were spent in praise and prayer. "As the lamp of life began to burn dim, the light of the Lord shone brighter and brighter on his soul." A few hours before the spirit left the body, a friend, after praying with him, said, "John, is Jesus now precious?" The dying saint replied, "Very precious." "John," added his friend, "I think the lump is leavened." "Yes," said he, "it is finished;" and immediately fell asleep in Jesus.

sequently one of the most eminent and useful of the early Methodist preachers. He was born at Coalburne, in the parish of Ryton, Durham, on the 22d of December, 1722. His early days were spent in youthful folly; but under the ministration, first of Mr. Charles Wesley, and afterwards of Mr. Jonathan Reeves, the true light shone upon him; he felt that he was undone. "Sick of sin, sick of himself, and sick of the world," he fled to Christ and His atonement, as the one and only remedy; and, placing there his confidence and hope, found, as he expresses himself, "a glorious and undenial change. God, Christ, angels, men, heaven, earth, and the whole creation, appeared to him in a new light, and stood related to him in a manner he never knew before." All his idols fell to the ground before the ark of God. He found a perfect hatred to sin, and a complete victory over it; and went on his way rejoicing.

Having received for that day a good education, he sought a livelihood by tuition. As were his Sabbaths, so also were his vacant hours, day by day, spent in "preaching, reading, praying, and visiting the sick;" and in conversing with all with whom he had to do, on things "pertaining to the kingdom of God." Such was the course of preparation for toils and successes in his future ministerial life.

His itinerant career may be regarded as commencing as early as 1747, when he is found going "from town to town, and from house to house," wherever hearers could be gathered together, "singing, praying, and preaching the word." Great numbers are awakened, and find peace with God through the blood of the Lamb. For a season he sustained himself and his family by his tutorial duties, preaching as opportunity served in Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, and the towns and villages for thirty miles around his dwelling; in many of which, he was instrumental in the formation of Societies which continue

to this day. He met with much opposition, and was often in circumstances of great peril. Yet, as his sufferings for the sake of Christ abounded, his "comfort abounded more and more."

In the year 1749 he was wholly separated to the work in which his soul delighted; yet engaging therein without any certain means of subsistence for his wife and family. "In those days there was no provision made for preachers' wives, no funds, no stewards. He that had a staff might take it, or go without, or stay at home."* His labours in Newcastle and the neighbourhood almost lead us to regard him as being, Methodistically, the apostle of the north. There his earliest and most successful preaching-efforts were put forth. By Conferential appointment, nine ministerial years were, at intervals, spent in connexion with the Orphan-House and its circuit. He accompanied Mr. Wesley on his first visit to North Britain, and in after years laboured there successfully. In Ireland, also, several years of his life were usefully spent; till, in 1790, from growing infirmity he was obliged to desist from his itinerant duties. Yet, in the comparative retirement of his after life, as strength permitted, he endeavoured to do good.

He was a man of strict integrity; sustaining, throughout his religious career, an unblemished reputation. He had

* Hopper, with others, was occasionally, on this point, the subject of severe temptation. "I well remember," writes he, "once on the top of a cold mountain, in a violent storm of snow, when the congealed flakes covered me with a white mantle, Satan assaulted me, and pushed me hard to return to my school, or to some other business, to procure bread. I staggered through unbelief, and almost yielded to the tempter. But as the attack was sudden, so the battle was soon over. The Lord sent these words to my heart like lightning: 'When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing, Lord.' I answered with a loud voice, 'Nothing, Lord! nothing, Lord!' All my doubts and fears vanished in a moment, and I went on my way rejoicing."

considerable natural ability, and was an eloquent and successful “dispenser of the word of God,”—in his denunciations of evil “a son of thunder,” but to the tempted and sorrowing “a son of consolation.” A diligent student of holy Scripture, he sought, in all his public ministrations, “rightly to divide the word of truth.” “Often did it happen, whilst he was delivering his message to tumultuous assemblies, with an energy which strongly marked the interest which he himself had in it, that giddy triflers, impious despisers, ringleaders of mobs, and the most abandoned reprobates, have wondered, trembled, and given signs, as convincing as they were sudden, of the deepest compunction and sorrow of heart. The bitter wailings of the penitent prisoners have been turned into songs of deliverance, and the whole assembly has been solemnly impressed by a deep sense of the presence and majesty of God. And that Divine unction which rendered his word so efficacious, during the earlier years of his ministry, continued to attend him, both in his public and more private exercises, to the end of his life.” His departure hence was eminently peaceful: “I have not the shadow of a doubt,” said he to a friend; “and as for the enemy, I know not what has become of him: I have neither seen nor heard of him for a long time. I think he has quitted the field.” Almost his last words were, “Come, Lord Jesus! come quickly.” On Friday, March 6th, 1802, he entered into rest.

JONATHAN REEVES was, for some years, an eminently useful and acceptable preacher, though often called to “endure hardness as a good soldier.” His zealous and successful ministrations more than once provoked the ire of those in authority. A writ issued December 4th, 1745, by the Rev. Henry Wickham, one of His Majesty’s justices of the peace for the West-Riding of Yorkshire, directs the constable of Keighley “to convey the body of Jonathan Reeves to His Majesty’s gaol and castle at

York ;"—his real crime being that of warning sinners to "flee from the wrath to come :" but he was "suspected," the writ states, "of being a spy among us, and a dangerous man to the peace and government of His Majesty King George." The grand jury of Cork, some years after, go a little farther ; when, with Charles Wesley and seven of the lay Helpers, Reeves is presented as "a person of ill fame, a vagabond, and common disturber of His Majesty's peace ;" the presentment ending with the prayer, that he might be transported ! Providentially, in both instances, these proved to be idle words.

Wearied, however, by constant harassing, and having as a preacher no fixed or sufficient means of livelihood, Mr. Reeves seeks episcopal ordination, and for some years officiated at the Magdalen Hospital, London. But, with increased outward comfort, his sphere of usefulness is greatly abridged ; the governors of the establishment, more effectually to prevent the introduction of the "new doctrine," requiring him to read the sermons of Tillotson, rather than any lucubrations of his own ! He afterwards obtains a curacy at Whitechapel. Mr. Wesley's confidence in him was shown in selecting him as one of the first trustees of the Orphan-House, and in requesting his attendance at the third Methodist Conference, held in 1746, at Bristol.

THOMAS MEYRICK, by birth a Cornishman, and designed for the legal profession, devoted himself, soon after receiving "the grace of God in truth," to the work of the ministry. For several years, though in the midst of much privation, and often in peril from wicked men, he zealously discharged, as one of Mr. Wesley's helpers, the duties of an evangelist. Obtaining afterwards ordination in the Church, he is employed as a curate, at or near Halifax. The end of his ministerial career was, unhappily, not as its beginning.

About this period, (July, 1743,) the new erection being

ready for occupancy, GRACE MURRAY, subsequently known as one of the celebrities of early Methodism, enters, at Mr. Wesley's request, upon the charge of the Orphan-House establishment, in the capacity of housekeeper, or matron ; the duties of which office, involving no small amount of care and responsibility, she discharges with fidelity and zeal, till her marriage, in October, 1749 ; excepting, perhaps, an interval of eighteen months, when she appears to have been otherwise engaged. Her maiden name was Norman. Robert and Grace, her parents, both God-fearing persons, resided at Newcastle ; where, on the 23d of January, 1715, their daughter Grace was born.

Almost from reason's dawn, she appears to have been the subject of deep religious impressions. To her infant imagination, when she was scarcely four years of age, God was presented in a dream, as "sitting upon His throne, and coming to judge the world :" she thought He smiled upon her. An earnest and intense desire to serve Him sprang up in the breast of the child, so that, as soon as capable of so doing, she read the Scripture with frequency and delight, though at the time unable rightly to understand its truths. The record of our Saviour's sufferings deeply affected her. Nor was she, even at that early age, (her son remarks,) a stranger to the drawings of Divine love ; which sometimes filled her heart with unspeakable pleasure in the house of God, so that she wanted to be there always. One special instance of this kind occurred to her in St. Andrew's church, when little more than seven years old. Her youthful mind was strangely drawn, in thought and desire, toward God ; a sense of His love was felt ; and impressions were produced, which never afterwards, even in her days of worldly pleasure, were wholly effaced.

Being placed at a school where dancing was taught, that fascinating folly proved to her "a great snare ;" and, in the company and frivolity to which it led, her good im-

pressions died away. Her principles and hopes were well-nigh stranded. In after life, her sense of the danger and evil of that practice was strong and lasting.

In May, 1736, she was united in marriage with Mr. Alexander Murray, a master-mariner, nearly related to a considerable family of the same name in Scotland. His father, being concerned in the Rebellion of 1715, forfeited his estate, and, with several brothers, was banished from the kingdom. Alexander, thus disinherited, and altogether unacquainted with business-pursuits, "turned his attention to a seafaring life," in which for several years he was successfully engaged.*

"Superior personal accomplishments" being combined with "an imagination brilliant and lively in the highest degree," with a voice peculiarly sweet and of great compass, and great proficiency in her favourite accomplishment of dancing, the company of the newly-married one was much sought after in gay circles. With her husband, by whom she was tenderly beloved, she associated in all the vanities of the day. Soon, however, she was painfully given to feel,—

"Attempt how monstrous, and how surely vain,
With things of earthly sort, with aught but God,
With aught but moral excellence, and truth, and love,
To satisfy and fill the' immortal soul."

Her first-born child—on which, with a mother's fondness she had doted—sickened and died. Recognising in this visitation the warning voice of God, she lost at once her relish for the vain pursuits in which she had hitherto fruitlessly indulged: an aching void was felt within. "I wanted," says she,—"but I knew not what. The Lord had made a wound, which no earthly balm could heal."

Being resident in London, she embraced every opportunity of hearing the word, and of mingling with good people. Under the ministry of Whitefield and Wesley,

* When returning from Virginia, in 1742, Mr. Murray found a watery grave.

her convictions of sin were deepened. Her need of Christ was sorrowfully felt; till one day, when reading the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, she was "filled with light and love." Her lips were now opened to praise God; every energy of soul and body was at once consecrated to His service; the same exuberance of spirit, and cheerful ardour, which had marked her worldly movements, now characterizing all her religious exercises and engagements.*

* In a letter, written May, 1740, in compliance with the request of Mr. Charles Wesley, she thus details to him the particulars of her conversion :—

"REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

"My heart being now open before God, I will write as in His presence.

"The first gift of faith I received after I had seen myself a lost sinner, bound with ten thousand chains, and dropping into hell. I then heard the voice, 'Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;' and could say, 'The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me.' I thought I saw Him at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for me. I went on in great joy for four months: then pride crept in, and I thought the work was finished, when it was but just begun. There I rested, and in a little time fell into doubts and fears, whether my sins were really forgiven me, till I plunged myself into the depths of misery. I could not pray; neither had I any desire to do it, or to read, or hear the word. My soul was like the troubled sea. Then did I see my own evil heart, my cursed devilish nature; and feel my helplessness, that I could not so much as think a good thought. My love was turned into hatred, passion, envy, &c.

"I felt a thousand hells my due, and cried out, in bitter anguish of spirit, 'Save, Lord, or I perish!'

"In my last extremity I saw my Saviour full of grace and truth for me; and heard His voice again, whispering, 'Peace, be still.' My peace returned, and greater sweetness of love than I ever knew before.

"Now my joy is calm and solid; my heart drawn out to the Lord continually. I know that my Redeemer liveth for me! He is my strength and my rock, and will carry on His work in my soul to the day of redemption.

"Dear Sir, I have spoken the state of my heart, as before the Lord. I beg your prayers that I may go on, from strength to strength, from conquering to conquer, till death is swallowed up of victory."

By Mr. Charles Wesley she was admitted into the Society at the Foundery ; and some months after, whilst prostrate in prayer before God, she was favoured with a peculiarly gracious manifestation of the Divine presence and regard. We quote her own record of the solemn scene :— “ Whether I was ‘ in the body or out of the body,’ I know not ; but I saw what no human tongue can express, neither durst I utter, concerning the glory of the Divine Persons in the Godhead. I was also made sensible, that God the Father accepted me in His Son, as if I had not committed one sin ; and that the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ was imputed to me for justification, with all that He had purchased by His life and death ; and, at the same time, those words were applied to my soul with the greatest power,—‘ Peace I leave with thee ; my peace I give unto thee ; not as the world giveth give I unto thee.’ Now, also, the Lord sent the ‘ Spirit of adoption,’ ‘ crying, Abba, Father.’ ‘ The Spirit itself’ bore ‘ witness’ with my spirit, that I was a child of God ; I rejoiced with ‘ joy unspeakable and full of glory.’ The sense of this Divine manifestation the enemy could never tear away from me, in all my violent temptations afterwards : even when I was almost driven to despair, this would come again and again to my mind,—God cannot change.”

The sincerity of her profession, and also her confidence in God, were, on her husband’s return from sea, severely tested. This “ new way ” he strongly opposed ; prohibiting, with fearfully profane asseveration, all attendance on the services of Methodism, as well as all further intercourse with her religious friends. Steps indeed were taken, under the plea of lunacy, to shut her up, in “ the Mad-house, West Gardens.” Yet, under treatment thus harsh and painful, her mind was graciously sustained ; and, continuing steadfast in the hour of trial, she soon had her way providentially made plain.

The more than ordinary qualifications for usefulness, possessed by this devoted woman, were quickly appreciated. In connection with the Society in London, she is appointed by Mr. Wesley the "leader of a band," and also a visiter of the sick,—an office to which, in that day, suitable persons were specially appointed. On removing to Newcastle, in October, 1742, her sphere of usefulness was greatly extended.

"On my arrival," she states, "I found that Mr. Wesley had been preaching both in the town and in the fields, and that the people flocked to hear the Gospel; which caused my spirits to revive, when I saw how the arm of the Lord was stretched out to save sinners in my native county. The word was attended with Divine power, and souls were daily added to the church. Mr. John Wesley being called up to London, his brother Charles came in his room, and the work of God increased wonderfully. A Society was formed, consisting of several hundreds; so that there was ample work for those who knew anything of the work of grace on their hearts. Soon afterwards Mr. John returned, and laid a plan for a preaching-house in the town, having purchased a plot of ground for that purpose. The Society at Newcastle was divided into classes with their respective leaders, like those in London. Mr. Wesley fixed me in that part of the work which he thought proper; and when the house was finished, I was appointed to be the housekeeper. Soon also the people were again divided into bands, or small select Societies; women by themselves, and the men in like manner. I had full a hundred in classes, whom I met in two separate meetings, and a band for each day of the week. I likewise visited the sick and backsliders, which was my pleasant meat. The work of God was my delight; and when I was not employed in it, I seemed out of my element. We had also several Societies in the country, which I regularly visited; meeting the women in

the day-time, and in the evening the whole Society. And oh ! what pourings out of the Spirit have I seen at those times ! It warms my heart now, while I relate it. I doubt not but I shall meet some of those precious souls, amongst whom I was so often refreshed in prayer, to sing the high praises of God and the Lamb for ever."

The Society-engagements of the matron were not, however, permitted to interfere with the skilful and efficient management of the Orphan-House, when regarded as the temporary domicile of Wesley and his " helpers." Dr. Stevens, in his History of Methodism,* presents a very correct estimate of her matron-qualifications :—" For several years, by her rare skill, her piety, and womanly amenities, she rendered the Orphan-House a hallowed and favourite home, though always a brief one, for the great evangelist, and his laborious itinerants. Here they paused to refresh themselves, among its warm-hearted Methodists, before passing on to the cold receptions of Scotland ; and returned to recruit their strength from the bleak winters of the Highlands."

A wider sphere of action soon presented itself. Acting under Mr. Wesley's direction, Grace visits the Societies, not only in several counties of her native land, but also in the sister isle. In this her intercourse with the people of Methodism, she becomes an instrument of great good. Her apprehension and knowledge of the things of God, her ready utterance, her affectionate and winning address, cause her to be welcomed, wherever her lot is cast, as an angel of light. She never indeed attempted to preach ; but her gifts were much honoured of God, abounding as she did in works of faith and love. Mr. Wesley was accustomed to speak of her as his " right hand."

She generally travelled on horseback, and frequently without any companion. Her equestrian skill was matter.

* Vol. ii., p. 125.

of notoriety. "An old man once told, how he saw her take her leave at a house-door in Yorkshire. Her horse stood waiting. She came out. A glance of her eye quickly told her all was right. No man might touch, even to help her, for she was on God's errand: so she laid her hand upon the conscious beast, and it knelt to receive her. She sprang lightly into the saddle, waved her arm, and, as in a moment, was out of sight; and the old man saw her no more, except in dreams." *

More than ordinary spiritual manifestations have been referred to, as vouchsafed to the subject of this brief memoir. These were, however, counterbalanced by more than ordinary scenes of mental conflict,—of sore temptation, through which it was her lot to pass. In advanced life, she considered these as having been permitted of God, "to correct the bad effect of those undue caresses she met with among the Societies; to humble her, and to make her know what was in her heart; as well as to teach her how to sympathize with and comfort the souls of the distressed;" for which, by painful experience, she was eminently qualified. For two years, even when most successful in promoting the religious comfort and edification of others, she was herself sorely "buffeted of Satan," haunted incessantly by atheistic and even "horrible suggestions," till almost disposed to disbelieve everything contained in the Scriptures. Such was the corroding influence then exerted, that she was "reduced almost to a skeleton:" yet, throughout the whole, her confidence in God was never wholly gone. The darkening clouds at length withdrew; the peace and joy of former days returned.

One interesting episode in the history of Grace Murray cannot, perhaps, be better introduced than by quoting the words of the Rev. Henry Moore, the personal friend, as well as the biographer, of the founder of Methodism:—

* Life of Dr. Bunting, by his Son, vol. i., p. 5.
F

“Mr. Wesley, who knew all her proceedings, and greatly esteemed her labours, thought he had found ‘a help meet’ for him. But while he indulged these pleasing prospects, in which he was encouraged by his highly-valued friend, the vicar of Shoreham, and others, they were dashed in pieces by the intelligence of Mrs. Murray’s marriage, on the 3d day of October, 1749, with Mr. John Bennet, one of the itinerant preachers, in the presence of Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Whitefield.”

That Mr. Wesley regarded Grace Murray with a lover’s eye, and had made overtures of marriage, to which she was a consenting party, may be received as an undoubted fact; and that his hopes were painfully frustrated by the interference of his brother, is equally matter of historic record. John Bennet, too, was a suitor of the matron-evangelist. In April, 1746, he was desired by Mr. Wesley to assist him in Newcastle; and hence he became, for a season, an inmate of the Orphan-House. During a severe and lengthened affliction with which he was visited, he regarded himself as little less than miraculously restored to health, in answer to the matron’s prayer. His life had been pronounced by the physician to be in imminent danger; yet, whilst she was pleading with God on his behalf, he suddenly cried out, “All my pain is gone! I am well,”—and recovered from that hour; an impression being at the same time felt, that “God in that prayer had given her to him for a wife.” A correspondence was subsequently kept up between them.

To Mr. Charles, the idea of his brother’s marrying at all, and especially of his being so united with one who, in some sense, had acted in the capacity of servant to him, *

* Such was, doubtless, the opinion of Charles. Yet the position of Grace Murray, as the superintendent of a religious house, and especially as connected with her Society-engagements, seems scarcely compatible with the idea of ordinary servitude, and still less so in any humiliating sense of the expression.

was distasteful in a high degree. He argued, also, that a step of that kind would prove offensive to the Societies at large, if indeed it did not arrest at once "the whole work of God." Entertaining views of this kind, he set himself, whether rightly or wrongly, to contravene his brother's strong desire and aim.

As to the influences brought to bear on Grace Murray, leading to her somewhat sudden marriage with Mr. Bennet; and as to questions more directly affecting the lady herself, and tending to show whether the charge of vacillation, to any censurable extent, could be sustained, —no end would in this day be answered by their recapitulation. A perusal of Mr. Wesley's clear and artless narrative of the case,—and also (through the kindness of the Rev. Dr. Hoole) of Mr. Charles Wesley's views, as recorded in his private Journal,—has left upon the mind of the writer but one impression;—that, granting it to have been desirable, that the founder of Methodism should enter into the hymeneal bond, no lady more suited to himself personally, or more adapted to sustain the duties and responsibilities of so important a relation as that of the wife of Wesley, could possibly have been selected, than the Orphan-House matron, Grace Murray;—that, throughout the whole, Mr. Wesley acted conscientiously, and with the most honourable intentions;—but that the propriety or kindness of Mr. Charles's interference may be justly called in question.

How keenly Mr. Wesley felt the disappointment, appears from the following letter, addressed to Mr. Thomas Bigg, of Newcastle, and bearing date, "October 7th, 1749:”—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"A LOVING husband is a very amiable character. A fond one, I think, is not so. But, if I had a wife, I

believe I should be the latter; and perhaps you may lean to the same extreme. To you, therefore, I can fully speak my mind.

“ Since I was six years old, I never met with such a severe trial as for some days past. For ten years, God has been preparing a fellow-labourer for me, by a wonderful train of providences. Last year, I was convinced of it; therefore, I delayed not, but, as I thought, made all sure beyond a danger of disappointment. But we were soon after torn asunder by a whirlwind. In a few months, the storm was over. I then used more precaution than before; and fondly told myself, that the day of evil would return no more. But it too soon returned. The waves rose again since I came out of London. I fasted, and prayed, and strove all I could; but the sons of Zeruiah were too hard for me. The whole world fought against me; but above all, my old familiar friend. Then was the word fulfilled: ‘Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes at a stroke; yet shalt thou not lament, neither shall thy tears run down.’

“ The fatal irrecoverable stroke was struck on Thursday last. Yesterday, I saw my friend (that was), and him to whom she is sacrificed. I believe you never saw such a scene. ‘But why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins?’

“ I am

“ Yours affectionately,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

“ The disappointment,” Mr. Moore justly remarks, “ was a most severe one to Mr. Wesley’s feelings; and perhaps the forgiveness and love which he manifested on that occasion was the highest proof of the power of the religion he possessed, that he was ever called to exercise

toward man."* Mr. Bennet was still continued as one of Mr. Wesley's "helpers," and treated by him with his former kindness. Subsequently, however, embracing Calvinistic sentiments, he, at Bolton, in 1752, publicly renounces all connection with the Wesleys, and shortly after is settled as a Dissenting minister at Warburton, in Cheshire, where he continues till removed by death in 1759.

The widowhood of Mrs. Bennet was in perfect keeping with the consistency and devotedness of her previous career. On removing to Chapel-en-le-Frith, near Buxton, she again associates with the people of her early choice; and, as a leader of two important classes, as a counsellor of the young, and a diligent visiter of the sick, is recognised and honoured as a "widow indeed," a "mother in Israel." She died in peaceful triumph, February 23d, 1803, in the eighty-ninth year of her age.

A sermon, on the occasion of her death, was preached by the Rev. Jabez Bunting, from Psalm xxvii. 13, 14; a text which had been selected by herself. In the memoir then read, it was characteristically stated,—"The word of God was, above all things, her delight and daily meditation. In all circumstances, she had recourse to it for counsel and comfort; and the Lord did, by means of His word,

* See, in Appendix C, an interesting poem, written on the occasion by Mr. Wesley, in which the warm and tender feelings of his nature are touchingly breathed forth. After its date Mr. Wesley saw Mrs. Bennet only once; when, at her request, accompanied by Mr. Moore, he, in 1788, visited her at the residence of her son, in Colebrook-row, London. She had then, for nearly thirty years, lived in widowhood. "The meeting," Mr. Moore records, "was affecting; but Mr. Wesley preserved more than his usual self-possession. It was easy to see, notwithstanding the many years which had intervened, that both in sweetness of spirit, and in person and manners, she was a fit subject for the tender regrets expressed in those verses. The interview did not continue long, and I do not remember that I ever heard Mr. Wesley mention her name afterward."—*Life of Wesley*, vol. ii., p. 171.

reveal Himself in a wonderful and gracious manner to her soul ; so that with respect to her the words of the psalmist were strikingly verified,— ‘The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.’ The spirit of prayer was peculiarly shed forth upon her ; and, in this holy exercise, the enlargements of her heart, and the breathings of her spirit towards God, very frequently surpassed what is common among Christians.”

She being dead, thus speaketh.

CHAPTER III.

1743—1745.

Methodism on the stage—Mobbing in Newcastle—Watson, the town-serjeant—Francis Scott—William Shent—John Nelson—John Downes—Thomas Beard, the Methodist proto-martyr—Letter from William Briggs—Severe winter—An easily besetting sin—Case between the Church and the Methodists stated—Singular introduction of Methodism into Osmotherley—Capture of Edinburgh by the Pretender—Great consternation in Newcastle—Means taken to defend the town—The Orphan-House in peril—Wesley at the camp on the town-moor.

METHODISM in Newcastle having successfully withstood all opposition, both in the form of domestic annoyance and persecution, and in that of mob-intimidation and misrule, was, toward the close of the year, subjected to the test of theatrical misrepresentation and burlesque.

On Wednesday, November 2d, 1743, the following advertisement appeared:—

“FOR THE BENEFIT OF MR. ESTE ;
BY THE
EDINBURGH COMPANY OF COMEDIANS,
ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH,
WILL BE ACTED A COMEDY, CALLED
THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS :
TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED
A FARCE, CALLED TRICK UPON TRICK,
OR,
METHODISM DISPLAYED.”

On the day appointed, a large concourse of people assembled in the Moot-Hall, to witness the irreligious exhibition; “some hundreds of whom sat on rows of seats erected on the stage. Soon after the comedians had

begun the first act of the play, on a sudden all those seats fell down at once, the supporters of them breaking like a rotten stick. The people were thrown upon one another, about five feet forward, but not one of them hurt. After a short time, the rest of the spectators were quiet, and the actors went on. In the middle of the second act, all the shilling seats gave a crack, and sunk several inches down. A great noise and shrieking followed; and as many as could readily get to the door, went out, and returned no more. Notwithstanding this, when the noise was over, the actors went on with the play. In the beginning of the third act, the entire stage suddenly sunk about six inches. The players retired with great precipitation; yet, in a while, they began again. At the latter end of the third act, all the sixpenny seats, without any kind of notice, fell to the ground. There was now a cry on every side; it being supposed that many were crushed in pieces. But, upon inquiry, not a single person (such was the mercy of God) was either killed or dangerously hurt. Two or three hundred remaining still in the hall, Mr. Este (who was to act the Methodist) came upon the stage, and told them for all this he was resolved the farce should be acted. While he was speaking, the stage sunk six inches more; on which he ran back in the utmost confusion, and the people, as fast as they could, out of the door, none staying to look behind him."

"Which is most surprising," proceeds Mr. Wesley, "that these players acted this farce the next week, or that some hundreds of people came again to hear?" * No lasting injury, however, accrued from efforts of this kind. Mr. Wesley, on speaking severally to the members of Society, finds their number not diminished, whilst many had "increased in the knowledge and love of God."

* Wesley's Works, vol. i., p. 445.

The year 1744 was by no means barren of incident as to the movements of Methodism in the north. In sympathy with other parts of the kingdom, great political excitement pervaded the masses of society in Newcastle and the neighbourhood. War had been declared by the British government against France and Spain. A French invasion was threatened, and was confidently looked for ; the object of which was supposed to be the placing on the throne of these realms an exiled representative of the house of Stuart ; thus securing the ascendency of Popery and arbitrary power. A state of feverish anxiety ensued ; and in many places, especially in St. Ives and Wednesbury, occasion was taken, under pretext of their being Papists, or partisans of the Pretender, to persecute and harass the followers of Wesley. To the prevalence of feelings of this kind may, perhaps, be traced the more than usual opposition manifested when, in the spring, Mr. Charles Wesley spent some weeks in Newcastle. The Orphan-House, when opened for worship, was frequently besieged by an outrageous mob, who were with difficulty tamed. On March 4th he places the following on record :—“The people of Newcastle were in an uproar, through the expectation of victory. They got their candles ready, and gave thanks,—that is, got drunk beforehand, and then came down to make a riot amongst us. Some of the brethren they struck, and threatened to pull down the desk. We were sensible that the powers of darkness were abroad, and prayed in faith against them. God heard, and scattered the armies of the alien.”

Yet, in the midst of outward tumult, “the word of the Lord” had “free course.” Among those who were brought under the influence of the truth was a Mr. Watson, one of the town-serjeants,—said to be the greatest swearer in Newcastle ; against whom it was now objected, by some of the corporation, his masters, that they could neither make him drink nor swear ! The Societies, too, were

quickened, and led from trouble without to greater circumspection and zeal. Mr. Wesley, on securing, shortly after his brother's visit, a quiet week in Newcastle, expresses his conviction, that "there was not only not a disorderly walker, but hardly a trifler, left among them."

The pulpit of the Orphan-House was supplied at this period, to a great extent, by Francis Scott, the cabinet-maker, of Wakefield; by William Shent, the "peruke-maker," of Leeds; and also by the mason-preacher, John Nelson; who, after being released from his soldier-impressment, on the 28th of July, is found, the next evening, proclaiming to a rejoicing people in the Orphan-House the word of life. William Briggs, too, one of Mr. Wesley's accredited helpers, was for a season located in Newcastle.

FRANCIS SCOTT may be regarded as the father of Methodism in Wakefield,* where he resided; and where, in his evangelistic efforts, he was rendered extensively useful. His house was the preacher's home. The first preaching-room in Wakefield was a building in his yard, fitted up by him as a chapel. In the work of preaching he greatly delighted; and, although not recognised formally as a "helper," was frequently from home "ten days or a fortnight at once, riding his own horse, and paying his own expenses." He thus "took turn" with William Shent and others, in visiting Newcastle; occasionally journeying as far as Musselburgh, in North Britain.

WILLIAM SHENT, whose wife, Mary, was the first Methodist in Leeds, was also a zealous and useful local preacher. Nelson, in his Journal, speaks of "three women" who came from Leeds to Birstal to hear him preach; "Mary Shent, and two others." The names of the latter were Mary Weddale and Mary Maude. These, who were frequently designated "the three Marys," were the first Methodists in Leeds. Shent, moved by the

* Smith's History of Methodism, vol. i., pp. 220, 221.

representations of his wife, was induced to hear the “new doctrine,” and soon became a convert to the truth. “His conversion,” says Nelson, “made an uproar in Leeds;” the reason of which was, that he professed to know his sins forgiven!

The name of NELSON, the stone-mason of Birstal, is with Methodists a household word. The circumstances attendant on his conversion to God,—his preaching-efforts in the West-Riding of Yorkshire,—his incarceration in the dungeon at Bradford, when, at the iniquitous instigation of the vicar, (Coley by name,) he was pressed for a soldier,—his lengthened and useful services in the Wesleyan Itinerancy,—are points on which neither illustration nor remark is needed.* His liberation from the army was, at the request of Wesley, effected by the Countess of Huntingdon’s influence; not, however, in acknowledgment of the gross injustice of his impressment, but on the terms of providing a substitute.

In the endurance of this arbitrary persecution, Nelson was not alone. The case of JOHN DOWNES was equally marked by rancour and injustice. For the sole crime of preaching the Gospel of salvation, the bench of magistrates sitting at Kirton-in-Lindsey, sign his impressment into the army, and send him as a prisoner to Lincoln gaol! Downes, if not a native of Horsley, was yet one of the first Methodists there. He entered upon the duties of the Itinerancy in 1743; having previously been often engaged as a reader of sermons at the Orphan-House, when no preacher was present. He is spoken of as “a man of sincere and unaffected piety, of great affliction, and possessing an uncommon genius.” Mr. Wesley regarded him as little inferior, either in native genius or strength of mind, to Sir Isaac Newton. “When he was at school,”

* See “Extract from the Journal” of Nelson, “published by himself.”

writes he, “learning algebra, Downes came one day to his master, and said, ‘Sir, I can prove this proposition a better way than it is proved in this book.’ His master thought it could not be; but, upon trial, acknowledged it to be so. Some time after, his father sent him to Newcastle, with a clock which was to be mended. He observed the clockmaker’s tools, and the manner how he took it to pieces, and put it together again; and, when he came home, first made himself tools, and then made a clock, which went as true as any in the town. I suppose, such strength of genius as this has scarcely been known in Europe before. Another proof of it was this:—Thirty years ago, while I was shaving, he was whittling the top of a stick. I asked, ‘What are you doing?’ He answered, ‘I am taking your face, which I intend to engrave on a copper-plate!’ Accordingly, without any instruction, he first made himself tools, and then engraved the plate. The second picture which he engraved was that which was prefixed to the Notes upon the New Testament.” After labouring as a preacher, with occasional intervals, thirty-one years, he was seized with mortal illness in the pulpit, when preaching in West-street chapel, London; and, in a few hours, breathed out his soul to God. So little had he gained as a preacher of the Gospel, that, on his decease, his widow, a most worthy woman, “had one sixpence in the world, and no more!”

THOMAS BEARD, another simple-minded, useful preacher, and the proto-martyr of Methodism, is on the same ground “torn from his trade, and wife, and children, and sent away as a soldier; that is, banished from all that was near and dear to him, and constrained to dwell among lions, for no other crime, either committed or pretended, than that of calling sinners to repentance. But his soul was in nothing terrified by his adversaries. Yet the body, after awhile, sunk under its burden. He was then lodged in the hospital at Newcastle, where he still praised God

continually. His fever increasing, he was let blood. His arm festered, mortified, and was cut off; two or three days after which, God signed his discharge, and called him up to his eternal home.”*

“Servant of God, well done! Well hast thou fought
 The better fight; who singly hast maintain’d,
 Against revolted multitudes, the cause
 Of God, in word mightier than they in arms!”

The following letter, † bearing date “Berwick-upon-Tweed, September 17th, 1744,” and addressed to the Rev. George Whitefield, is perhaps “the only document extant which proceeded from the pen of this persecuted man.” In it the spirit of the *Christian* sufferer is pleasingly exemplified.

“SIR,

“It has often been on my mind to write to you, since I have been in this state of life, which is not at all agreeable to my inclinations. I have but little acquaintance with you; yet I hope you will not be offended at my writing. The children of God, while on this side the grave, always stand in need of one another’s prayers; especially such of them as are under persecution or temptations for the truth’s sake. I find I stand in need of the prayers of all the children of God. I was pressed in Yorkshire, for preaching, and so sent for a soldier. I earnestly pray for them that were the occasion of it. All my trust and confidence is reposed in Jesus my Saviour. I know He will not leave nor forsake me. His blood has stoned for my sins, and appeased His Father’s wrath, and procured His favour for such a sinful worm as I; and herein is my comfort, though men rage at me, that my Saviour did not leave me nor forsake me. I have lately

* Wesley’s Works, vol. i., p. 467.

† Jackson’s Life of Charles Wesley, vol. i., p. 286.

been on a command in Scotland, and met with many that inquired concerning you. I preached at Cowdington. Some of your friends came to see me from Coppersmith. Many thought it strange to see a man in a red coat preach. I beg you would write to me, in General Blakeney's regiment of foot, in Captain Dunlop's company.

“I am

“Your unworthy brother,
“THOMAS BEARD.”

Soon after the above was written, this godly man exchanged the sorrows of earth for the rest of heaven. Mr. Charles Wesley wrote two beautiful hymns on the occasion of his death, from one of which we extract the following:—

“Soldier of Christ, adieu !
Thy conflicts here are past ;
Thy Lord hath brought thee through,
And given the crown at last :
Rejoice to wear the glorious prize,
Rejoice with God in paradise.

“Torn from thy friends below,
In banishment severe ;
A man of strife and woe,
No more thou wanderest here ;
Join'd to thy better friends above,
At rest in thy Redeemer's love.

“No longer now constrain'd
With human fiends to dwell,
To see their evil, pain'd
Their blasphemies to feel ;
Angels and saints thy comrades are,
And all adore the Saviour there.

“Thy victory we share,
Thy glorious joy we feel ;
Parted in flesh we are,
But join'd in spirit still ;
And still we on our brethren call
To praise the common Lord of all.

“Then let us still maintain
Our fellowship Divine ;
And till we meet again
In Jesu’s praises join ;
Thus, till we all your raptures know,
Sing *you* above, and *we* below.”

The winter this year was excessively severe, and the mob of Newcastle “bitterly hostile and riotous.” But “neither the heavy falls of snow, the piercing winds of the north, nor the fierce opposition of blaspheming mobs, could restrain Mr. Charles Wesley, then sojourning in Newcastle, from the exercise of his itinerant ministry, or prevent inquiring multitudes from attending it at the early hour of five in the morning.” He departs for London in the middle of December, leaving John Nelson in care of the Orphan-House and its Circuit.

The state of the Society, and the sedulous care taken to promote the spiritual advancement of its members, are strikingly shown in the following letter addressed by William Briggs to Mr. Wesley :—

“ Newcastle, December 28th, 1744.

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ I HAVE since yesterday morning had close conversation with thirty-six of the women, and nine of the young men, here. Such a company of earnest souls I hardly ever met together. One and all seem to have freedom from all outward sin, and are greatly desirous of being delivered entirely from all sin. Most of them are truly blessed mourners, and hungerers and thirsters after spiritual life and power, and in much misery without it ; and seem resolutely bent to forsake all other comforts, to enjoy the abiding Spirit of Christ dwelling in them. Those who seem less in earnest are often under strong convictions. All seem very steadfast in coming in the mornings and evenings, and most of them break through the various and odd obstacles which are set against their

praying at the hour (five) appointed; in which they find great power and many blessings. All, except three or four, opened their hearts to me (only not as freely, I believe, as they would to God Himself,) and in great simplicity told me all their troubles. And nothing seems so grievous to them as the evil of their own hearts, their unfaithfulness to the grace given, and their want of love to God. I was amazed, that people whom I never saw before should be so wonderfully plain and open to me a stranger.

“The Lord has wonderfully manifested His convincing power, whilst and since Mr. Charles was here. Many told me, weeping, that they were going careless, and back into the world, before he came; and now they were earnestly seeking the work of God to be finished in their souls. Though many of them are in exceeding great perplexity, and suffering great temptation, yet are they very willing to endure, so that they may but hold out to the end.

“I fully intended to have come away next Monday; but, through the earnest request of Brother Nelson, I am constrained to stay and visit the classes with him. By the return of the post, we should be glad of your advice, whom to put out and whom to take in. O, pray for us all!

“All join me in duty to yourself and Mr. Charles, and love to all the church.

“I am, Sir,
“Your son and servant in the Lord,
“WILLIAM BRIGGS.”

Two months after, Mr. Wesley, on visiting Newcastle, finds great difficulty, from the more than ordinary severity of the weather, in reaching the place; the whole country presenting “one great pathless waste of white.” “Many a rough journey,” writes he, “have I had before; but one like this I never had; between wind, and hail, and

rain, and ice, and snow, and driving sleet, and piercing cold. But it is past. Those days will return no more, and are therefore as though they had never been.

'Pain, disappointment, sickness, strife,
Whate'er molests or troubles life ;
However grievous in its stay,
It shakes the tenement of clay ;
When past as nothing we esteem,
And pain, like pleasure, is a dream.'"

He sets himself, on his arrival, to clear up various misunderstandings which had marred the peace, and put in peril the unity, of the Society ; bearing testimony at the same time, that the being soon offended was "the sin which, of all others, most easily besets the people of Newcastle." For the first time, (at least, as found on record,) he is the subject of personal disrespect and insult: one Robert Young, who had long signalized himself, as opportunity served, by abusing and throwing stones at the Orphan-House family, assaults Mr. Wesley in the street; "using most abusive language, intermixed with many oaths and curses." A letter of rebuke and intimidation leads, however, to promises of amendment and reform.

In a letter to a friend, Mr. Wesley now draws up "a short Statement of the Case between the Church and the Methodists ;" in which, after stating that for preaching "inward, present salvation, as attainable by faith alone," they had been forbidden to preach in the churches ; and hence were compelled, as occasion offered, to preach in private houses, and in the open air ; although for so doing many of the clergy had stigmatized them as heretics and schismatics,—as introducing Popery, and raising sedition,—and had also stirred up the people to treat them as "outlaws and mad dogs ;" he inquires, "What can be mutually done towards healing the breach ?" For himself, and those associated with him, he engages to do whatever the clergy might desire, provided it could be

done with “a safe conscience.” But he insists that, from an imperative sense of duty, they must still preach as their way opened ; their Societies, too, must be cared for, and watched over. From the clergy he simply desires fair treatment ;—the not being condemned without proof of what is alleged against them ; and that their opponents refrain from a persecuting spirit, and also from instigating others to riotous and bitter opposition. Little benefit, if any, resulted from the overture.

Previously to Mr. Wesley’s leaving Newcastle, a singular incident occurs, which in its attendant circumstances leads to the establishment of Methodism in Osmotherley, an ancient village in the North-Riding of Yorkshire. A Mr. Adams, who resided in the old Popish Hall there, having heard various “strange accounts” of Wesley and his followers, was anxious by personal observation and inquiry to test their truth. He presents himself at the Orphan-House in the character of an inquirer, and for ten or twelve days shares in the “lenten fare” of its inmates. A week after his departure,—Monday, April 15th,—Mr. Wesley, having held a religious service in the Orphan-House at half-past four in the morning, (when “many of the rich and honourable were present,”) preaches at Chester-le-Street at eight, and again in the evening “at the inn in Northallerton ;” where he is met by Adams and some of his neighbours. At their earnest solicitation, he accompanies them to Osmotherley, and, between ten and twelve o’clock that night, preaches in a chapel formerly belonging to a convent of Franciscan friars, to an attentive company ; many of whom, it is likely, had been roused from their beds to hear him. Midnight arrives ere he retires to rest ; yet, at five o’clock the following morning he is found addressing a large congregation, most of whom were or had been Papists ; several having sat up all-night, lest they should not be in time for the morning service. “How wise,” writes he, “are the ways of God ! How

am I brought, without any care or thought of mine, into the centre of the Papists in Yorkshire! O that God would arise and maintain His own cause; and all the idols let Him utterly abolish!" After the sermon, an elderly woman asks abruptly, "Dost thou think water-baptism an ordinance of Christ?" Wesley answers, "What saith Peter? 'Who can forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost even as we?'" Little more was necessary in order to produce conviction. " 'Tis right, 'tis right!" cries she: "I will be baptized." The rite took place that very hour.

Jenny Meek, a resident in Osmotherley, and intimately acquainted with the parties concerned, informed the Rev. Luke Tyerman, also a native of the place, (to whose kindness I am indebted for several interesting incidents recorded in this volume,) that the name of this good woman was Elizabeth Tyerman, a Quakeress, who had accompanied Adams to Northallerton, for the purpose of inducing Mr. Wesley to visit the village. The baptism was performed in a private house, two or three doors from the old Hall. Michael Snowden, Elizabeth's son-in-law, was one of the first Methodists in Osmotherley.

Adams had been in the Romish priesthood; but, taking to himself a wife, was no longer permitted to officiate in that relation. He retained possession of the Hall, and some landed property in connexion with it, to the day of his death. In May, 1777, Mr. Wesley, on visiting Osmotherley, records: "I found my old friend Mr. Watson," (the Adams here spoken of,) "who first brought me into this country, was dead, after living a recluse life for nearly fifty years. From one that attended him, I learned that the sting of death was gone, and he calmly delivered up his soul to God."

This village-introduction of Methodism is, perhaps, unique; Mr. Wesley preaching in a Popish chapel nearly at the noon of night, having been invited thither

by a priest and a Quakeress ! His favourite theme, "Salvation by faith," is successfully dwelt upon.

Whilst the Wesleys, amid honour and dishonour, were seeking the establishment of a kingdom which is "not of this world," political agitation became increasingly rife on every side. The horrors of invasion and of civil strife seemed to approach with hasty steps. Charles Stuart, grandson of James the Second, having unsuccessfully attempted to land a French army on the coast of Kent, makes his appearance in Scotland, for the purpose of regaining the British crown. Many of the disaffected clans flock to his standard ; and, being but feebly opposed by General Cope, the commander of the Royal army, (whose plans were unskillfully laid, and feebly executed,) Charles quickly makes himself master of the city of Edinburgh. The news of this, reaching Newcastle, throws the whole town into a state of extreme consternation and alarm. To the Orphan-House flock, the appearance of their spiritual instructor and guide was at this juncture most opportune. On the evening of his arrival, Wednesday, September 18th, Mr. Wesley expounds to a great concourse of people the third chapter of Jonah, dwelling particularly on the verse,—"Who can tell, if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?"

Whilst fear and darkness were on every side, all that human precaution and skill could devise to place the town in a posture of defence was quickly done. The mayor, Mr. Ridley, summons all the householders of the town to meet him, for the purpose of giving a written pledge* that at the hazard of their goods and lives they

* The following, copied from Brand's History of Newcastle, vol. iii., p. 525, is the document they were requested to sign :—

"The town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
in the county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

" WHEREAS an actual rebellion is begun in Scotland, and the city of Edinburgh is now possessed by a Popish Pretender, and his

will defend the town against the common enemy. The townsmen are ordered to be under arms, and to mount guard by turns. The Pilgrim-street gate, near which the Orphan-House stood, is directed to be walled up; and shortly after, on hearing of the defeat of the Royal army at Preston-pans, in which disastrous struggle Colonel Gardiner bravely fought, and nobly fell, similar directions are given as to the Pandon and Sally-port gates.

Mr. Wesley's unflinching loyalty, as well as his strong desire to arrest the progress of surrounding ungodliness, is well expressed in the following letter:—

“ TO THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF NEWCASTLE.

“ SIR,

“ My not waiting upon you at the Town-Hall was not owing to any want of respect. I reverence you for your office sake, and much more for your zeal in the execution of it. I would to God, every magistrate in the land would copy after such an example! Much less was it owing to any disaffection to His Majesty King George. But I knew not how far it might be necessary or proper for me to appear on such an occasion. I have no fortune at Newcastle: I have only the bread I eat, and the use of a little room for a few weeks in the year.

adherents; we, whose names are hereunto subscribed, being duly sensible of the many blessings we enjoy under His Majesty's happy administration; and that the continuance thereof can in no wise be expected, but by supporting His Majesty King George on the throne of these realms, and his Royal family; and as it is to be apprehended, that the rebels may proceed to make an attempt upon this town, do voluntarily oblige ourselves to appear in person, or to provide daily, or when we shall be required, an able man to act in concert with His Majesty's forces in this town, for the defence thereof against all His Majesty's enemies.

“ Dated this Fifteenth day of September, 1745.

“ M. RIDLEY, NATH. CLAYTON, ED. COLLINGWOOD,
RALPH SOWERBY, CUTHBERT SMITH, 'AUBONE SURTEES,
GEORGE CUTHBERTSON," and 806 others.

“ All I can do for His Majesty, whom I honour and love,—I think, not less than I did my own father,—is this: I cry unto God, day by day, in public and in private, to put all his enemies to confusion; and I exhort all that hear me to do the same, and in their several stations to exert themselves as loyal subjects; who so long as they fear God cannot but honour the king.

“ Permit me, Sir, to add a few words more out of the fulness of my heart. I am persuaded you fear God, and have a deep sense that His kingdom ruleth over all. Unto whom, then, (I may ask you,) should we flee for succour, but unto Him, whom by our sins we have justly displeased? O, Sir, is it not possible to give any check to these overflowings of ungodliness? to the open, flagrant wickedness, the drunkenness, and profaneness, which so abound, even in our streets? I just take leave to suggest this. May the God whom you serve direct you in this, and all things!

“ This is the daily prayer of, Sir,

“ Your obedient servant, for Christ’s sake,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

The day following, September 22d, in a letter to his brother, he states:—“ I have only just time to inform you, that since the account is confirmed by an express to the mayor, that General Cope is fled, and his forces defeated,—all that did not run away,—the consternation of the poor people is redoubled. The townsmen are put under arms; the walls planted with cannon; and those who live without the gates are removing their goods with all speed. We stand our ground as yet, (glory be to God!) to the no small astonishment of our neighbours. Brethren, pray for us, that, if need be, we may

‘ True in the fiery trial prove,
And pay Him back His dying love !’ ”

The Orphan-House, being situate beyond the walls of

the town, was exposed not only to the attack of the enemy, in the event of his approach, but also to the fire of the Loyalists, when defending the town. "Many wondered," observes Mr. Wesley, "we would stay without the walls: others told us, we must remove quickly; for, if the cannon began to play from the top of the gates, they would beat all the house about our ears. This made me look how the cannon on the gates were planted, and I could not but adore the providence of God: for it was obvious, 1. They were all planted in such a manner that no shot could touch our house. 2. The cannon on Newgate so secured us on one side, and those upon Pilgrim-street gate on the other, that none could come near our house, either way, without being torn in pieces." Thus, confiding in the God of battles, Mr. Wesley not only maintained his position at the Orphan-House, but pursued with greater diligence his wonted course; at every opportunity calling sinners to repentance; appointing special seasons for fasting and prayer, and visiting the Societies in the immediate neighbourhood; even though at one period, whilst thus engaged, the rebels were within seventeen miles of the town.

In answer, doubtless, to the prayers of the pious in that day,* the town of Newcastle was spared the pain and desolation of civil war; the Pretender and his forces, in journeying toward Derby, having taken another route.

In one important point, the providence of God was strikingly displayed. The scheme of the Pretender embraced the seizure of Tynemouth Castle, which was

* The scene which occurred at the Orphan-House on Sunday, September 29th, was by no means an exceptional one. "In the afternoon," writes Mr. Wesley, "I expounded part of the lesson for the day,—Jacob wrestling with the angel. The congregation was so moved, that I began again and again, and knew not how to conclude. And we cried mightily to God, to send His Majesty King George help from His holy place, and to spare a sinful land a little longer, if haply they might know the day of their visitation."

well supplied with cannon and ammunition. The capture might have been easily accomplished; and, marching hence to the hill on the east side of Newcastle, Charles might have taken the town almost without a blow. A spy from the rebel army, named Nixon, who, on being apprehended, had cut his throat, and was hence unable to speak, wrote down, as well as he could, what was thus contemplated; and, by order of the mayor, the cannon and ammunition were at once removed to a safer place.

The Orphan-House, too, though from a different quarter, appears to have had a narrow escape. In the judgment of the commanding officer, the battlements of the place stood in the way of his military arrangements, and were therefore ordered to be taken down. Mr. Wesley, though ready at once to comply, was far from pleased with the discourteous manner in which the notice was served; and, in the spirit of a Roman citizen, he remonstrated (Tuesday, October 8th) with General Husk, as follows:—

“A surly man came to me this evening, as he said, from you. He would not deign to come upstairs to me, but stood in the yard till I came, and then obliged me to go with him into the street; when he said, ‘You must pull down the battlements of your house; or, tomorrow, the General will pull them down for you.’

“Sir, to me this is nothing. But I humbly conceive it would not be proper for this man, whoever he is, to behave in such a manner to any other of His Majesty’s subjects, at so critical a time as this.

“I am ready, if it may be for His Majesty’s service, to pull not only the battlements, but the house, down; or to give up any part of it, or the whole, into Your Excellency’s hands.”

Here, fortunately, the matter ended. All danger being regarded as over, Mr. Wesley, leaving John Trembath in charge of the Orphan-House Society, visits Doncaster, Birstal, and Leeds; and returning, on the 22d inst., finds

"all things calm and quiet; the consternation of the people being over, whilst the seriousness which it had occasioned had continued and increased."

The extreme profanity of the soldiery "vexes his righteous soul," and calls forth the following letter to Alderman Ridley, in which his intense desire to be "instant in season, out of season," in his Master's work, is pleasingly apparent :—

"SIR,

"THE fear of God, the love of my country, and the regard I have for His Majesty King George, constrain me to write a few plain words to one who is no stranger to these principles of action.

"My soul has been pained day by day, even in walking the streets of Newcastle, at the senseless, shameless wickedness, the ignorant profaneness, of the poor men to whom our lives are entrusted. The continual cursing and swearing, the wanton blasphemy of the soldiers in general, must needs be a torture to the sober ear, whether of a Christian or an honest infidel. Can any that fear God, and love their neighbour, hear this without concern? especially, if they consider the interest of our country, as well as of these unhappy men themselves. For, can it be expected, that God should be on their side, who are daily affronting Him to His face? And, if God be not on their side, how little will either number, or courage, or strength avail!

"Is there no man that careth for these souls? Doubtless, there are some who ought to do so. But many of these, if I am rightly informed, receive large pay, and do just nothing.

"I would to God, it were in my power, in any degree, to supply their lack of service. I am ready to do what in me lies, to call these poor sinners to repentance, once or twice a day, (while I remain in these parts,) at any hour,

or at any place. And I desire no pay at all for doing this; unless what my Lord shall give at His appearing.

“ If it be objected, (from our heathenish poet,) ‘ This conscience will make cowards of us all,’ I answer, Let us judge by matter of fact. Let either friends or enemies speak. Did those who feared God behave as cowards at Fontenoy? Did J. H., the dragoon, betray any cowardice before or after his horse sunk under him? Or did W. C., when he received the first ball in his left, and the second in his right arm? Or John Evans, when the cannon-ball took off both his legs? Did he not call all about him, as long as he could speak, to praise and fear God, and honour the king? as one who feared nothing, but lest his last breath should be spent in vain?

“ If it were objected, that I should only fill their heads with peculiar whims and notions, that might easily be known. Only let the officers hear with their own ears; and they may judge whether I do not preach the plain principles of manly, rational religion.

“ Having myself no knowledge of the General, I took the liberty to make this offer to you. I have no interest herein; but I should rejoice to serve as I am able my king and country. If it be judged that this will be of no real service, let the proposal die, and be forgotten. But I beg you, Sir, to believe, that I have the same glorious cause, for which you have shown so becoming a zeal, earnestly at heart; and that therefore

“ I am, with warm respect,

“ Sir,

“ Your most obedient servant,

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

This offer of service does not, indeed, appear to have been entertained; since, a few days after, we find him preaching frequently on the town-moor, “ at a small distance from the English camp.” At first, he fails to

rivet the attention of the abandoned soldiers, “the words of a scholar not affecting them like those of a dragoon or grenadier;” yet shortly he perceives some fruit of his labour, “not only in the number of his hearers, but in the power of God, which was more and more among them, both to wound and heal.” His last visit to the neighbourhood of the camp is thus recorded:—“Sunday, November 3d. Between one and two in the afternoon, I went to the camp once more. Abundance of people now flocked together, horse and foot, rich and poor; to whom I declared, ‘There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.’ I observed many Germans standing disconsolate at the skirts of the congregation: to these, I was constrained (though I had discontinued it so long) to speak a few words in their own language. Immediately, they gathered up close together, and drank in every word.” The day following Mr. Wesley journeys southward.

“Loyalty,” Wesley was wont to say, was with him “an essential branch of religion.” Not only were his movements in Newcastle, but all his steps in after life, in perfect keeping with this profession. His offer to discharge gratuitously, whilst resident in the neighbourhood, the duties of chaplain to the soldiery in Newcastle, as well as his proposal made some years subsequently, when the kingdom was in imminent danger, to provide men for the army, is in evidence that he had but little sympathy with those would-be philanthropists who venture, in circumstances of national peril, to discourage or oppose the arming of our citizens in defence of country and home. To the Volunteer-movement of the present day, Wesley would, from principle, have been a willing party. He feared God; and hence both loved his country, and honoured the king.

CHAPTER IV.

1746—1750.

Fearful pestilence in Newcastle—Letter from John Nelson—Newcastle the head of a Circuit—Charles Wesley's visit—Methodism in Hexham—Letter of invitation from Mr. Wardrobe, a pious Dissenting minister—Charles Wesley's hymns—Mr. Wesley's examination of the Orphan-House Society—An odd hindrance of brotherly love—Jeannie Keith—Joseph Cownley—Sacramental controversy—Certificate of Mr. Moore's ordination—Methodism in Morpeth, Alnwick, and Berwick—First Quarterly Meeting in Newcastle—Functions of Quarterly Meetings stated—Whitehaven added to the Newcastle Circuit.

THE spring of 1746 was characterized, in Newcastle, by the visitation of a deadly sickness, which raged in every quarter of the town. So fearful were its effects among the soldiery, that, in the course of a few months, nearly two thousand of their number were swept away. Religious good seems, however, to have resulted. “When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”

The following letter, addressed to Mr. Wesley by John Nelson, to whom the care of the Orphan-House Society was again entrusted, refers to an extension of the work of God in Newcastle and the immediate vicinity:—

“Newcastle, July 16, 1746.

“DEAR FATHER IN THE LORD,

“THIS comes with my duty to you, and to let you know how I find all in these parts. God is greatly reviving His work, both in town and in the country, as far as I can find. There have been more justified within

these five weeks, than for several months past. To God be all the glory!—for I see, more clearly than ever, that the good that is done upon the earth He doeth it Himself, and He will not give His honour to another.

“I have lately been at Brother Brown’s, at Newlands. There were a great many hearers, and we were blessed with peace; so that I believe it will be well to visit that place, as the people seem willing to hear. But Sunderland should not be neglected, as the sacred fire is already kindled there. Several have found redemption in the blood of Christ; and many more cannot rest day or night, but are crying out, ‘Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!’ I see the necessity of using great plainness of speech; for, till a man sees that he is a condemned sinner, he will not forsake all and follow the despised Jesus. All our preaching seemed to be as the words of one having a pleasant voice to this people, till a month ago. On the Lord’s day I went and preached to them on these words, —‘Prepare to meet thy God!’ The Lord enabled me to speak such sharp words, that my own mind was greatly affected, and many that heard me started, as if the earth was about to open her mouth under them, and let them drop down into hell. Since then, many have been sensible of their sin and misery; and others have been delivered from the spirit of bondage, and have received the Spirit of adoption. Sister Murray has been greatly blessed to them. She visited them twice; and there were two set at liberty the first time she went, and five the second.

“My best prayers attend you.

“I am your unworthy son, to serve in the

“Gospel of Christ,

“JOHN NELSON.”

The above, though from the pen of an uneducated man, strikingly exemplifies the spirit by which the early “helpers” of Wesley were actuated. “To turn men

from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," was regarded by themselves as their special vocation, and their one business. Nothing was, in fact, deemed to be accomplished, till in the forgiveness of sin, and in the consecration of the heart and life to God, those to whom they ministered became the subjects of that "kingdom" which is "not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

In the earliest Circuit-record now extant, Newcastle appears this year as one of seven Circuits into which the country was divided. The following arrangement—not, perhaps, the first of the kind—was adopted at the third Methodist Conference,* held in the month of May at Bristol:—

1. London, including Surrey, Kent, Essex, Brentford, Egham, Windsor, Wycombe.
2. Bristol, including Somersetshire, Portland, Wilts, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire.
3. Cornwall.
4. Evesham, including Shrewsbury, Leominster, Hereford, and from Stroud to Wednesbury.
5. Yorkshire, including Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutlandshire, and Lincolnshire.
6. Newcastle.
7. Wales.

The extent† of the Newcastle Circuit is not stated.

* This Conference was attended by John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Hodges, Jonathan Reeves, (one of the Orphan-House trustees,) Thomas Maxfield, Thomas Westell, Thomas Willis, Samuel Taylor, and Thomas Glascot.

† At the Conference of 1748, held at the chapel-house in Tower-street, London, when William Briggs, William Welsh, and Patrick Thompson (of Newcastle), were present as stewards, Newcastle is published as one of *nine* Circuits, into which England and Wales were then divided; "including, 1. Osmotherley. 2. Newcastle itself. 3. Sunderland. 4. Biddick. 5. Burnupfield. 6. Spen. 7. Swalwell. 8. Horsley. 9. Plessey. 10. Berwick-upon-Tweed."

Although, perhaps, more restricted than the Yorkshire "Round," which embraced not less than seven counties, the Circuit of which the Orphan-House was the centre, whilst extending northward as far as Edinburgh, took in the counties of Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Westmoreland. Itinerancy was at that period a toilsome reality.

Toward the close of the year, Mr. Charles Wesley, accompanied by Edward Perronet, spends little less than three months in Newcastle and the neighbourhood. The principal incident connected with this visit is the introduction of Methodism into the ancient town of Hexham; where, at the pressing instance of Mr. Wardrobe, a pious Dissenting minister, he preaches frequently during his protracted stay.

A letter addressed to the elder Wesley, some months before, and endorsed by him as "an artless invitation to preach from an Israelite indeed," presents so pleasing an instance of true catholicity of spirit, that its insertion here will not by any be regarded as intrusive:—

" Hexham, March 4th, 1745-6.

" REVEREND SIR,

" I AM no Methodist, neither indeed can I adopt several of the principles that you seem to hold, but must needs judge the truth to be clouded with many erroneous mistakes. Notwithstanding, it manifestly appears that a good work has been begun and carried on under your ministrations. Should I challenge the wisdom of the Sovereign of heaven, who takes His own method of working?

" I should make apology for this trouble from a stranger, but shall make no other than this: That it is to desire you not to confine your ministrations to the place where you now are, exclusive of some other parts of the neighbourhood which loudly call for a visit; if so be, God may

thereby think upon them, that they perish not. Who knows, but even in Hexham some trophies of a Redeemer's conquest are by such means to be set up—some poor sinners to be called home to Christ? If one soul might get good, you would not, I am persuaded, judge it lost labour. Nay, methinks, you would submit to reproach, to shame, yea, even to death.

“ I am one of the brethren of the Nonconformity. It might, perhaps, raise prejudice in the breasts of those among whom you will have access to preach if you come here, should it be known that I have solicited you. O that they might be caught by guile! I can see scarce the shadow of scriptural Christianity in this place, if it be not in their going to church on the Lord's day, and some attending public prayers on the week-days. The generality of Dissenters are little better; and I should have melancholy days here, were I not now and then refreshed among the societies of some praying friends. It would affect any tender heart to pass through this place, to look into houses, to hear their conversation, to see their behaviour, to find in some parts a bare outside civility, but no religion: and yet it would be taken very ill to say, ‘ Is this a Christian town?’ Ministers and people are asleep amidst a more terrible storm than that which alarmed the pagan ship-master and crew. What numbers of souls are dying in ignorance and deceit! I see not but people are ready to hear, if Christ was preached: though the many partitions, raised by the lusts of men's passions, hinder their receiving the word gladly, but from the mouth of those of their own denomination; which is a consideration of weight with me in desiring you to take a tour to Hexham.

“ Tuesday is the market-day in this town. That afternoon, when the market is partly over, might be a suitable opportunity; or, if it was on the Lord's-day evening, when people plainly give proof of reigning carnality, under the

dominion of sin. But I care not when it be, if you do but come: I doubt not but people will hear a stranger any day.

“ Some, I find in my observations, oppose the Methodists out of ignorance, because they are generally spoke against; others, out of strong prejudice; some, because their craft is in danger; and others, because really they neither know nor care for the religion of Jesus Christ; and, it may be, some, from conscience. But, if Christ be preached, and sinners converted, I shall rejoice, whoever may be employed as the instruments. I think I could rejoice to see sinners awakened, and seeking after a Saviour, going Zionward in crowds, though I should find myself obliged to worship in a manner somewhat different from them.

“ I have wrote you these, when I was musing what might be the most likely methods for reviving and spreading religion. A line by the post would oblige me. In the meantime, I am,

“ Reverend Sir,

“ Yours in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,
“ T. WARDROBE.”

“ O that all our Dissenting brethren were likeminded!” exclaims Mr. Charles Wesley, after spending an evening in the company of this good man: “ then would all dissensions cease for ever.”

Mr. Charles Wesley’s first sermon at Hexham was delivered on the 27th of November, in the market-place; none interrupting, save one unfortunate magistrate,—“ Squire Roberts,” who could get no one, either by command or entreaty, to second him. Even the constable, who was ordered to take the preacher down, ventured to remonstrate. “ Sir,” said he, “ I cannot have the face to do it; for what harm does he do?” In the evening, service was held in the cock-pit, where the magistrate’s son laboured hard “ to raise a mob,” but in vain. “ I

called," writes Mr. Charles, "in words then first heard in that place, 'Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' God struck the hard rock, and the waters gushed out. Never have I seen a people more desirous at the first hearing." "November 28th," continues he,* "at six, we assembled again in our chapel, the cock-pit. I imagined myself in the Pantheon, or some heathen temple, and almost scrupled preaching there at first. But we found 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' His presence consecrated the place. Never have I seen a greater awe, or sense of God, than while we were repeating His own prayer. I set before their eyes Christ crucified, and crying from the cross, 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?' The rocks were melted into gracious tears. We knew not how to part. I distributed some books amongst them, which they received with the utmost eagerness, begging me to come again, and to send our preachers to them."

A fortnight after, Mr. Charles is again at Hexham, preaching in the market-place at the Cross. At four in the afternoon he attempts to preach in the cock-pit, but the territory of the enemy is claimed by his own servants. The butlers of Sir Edward Blackett, and of the magistrate, bring their cocks, and "set them a-fighting." "I gave them the ground," says Mr. Wesley, "and walked straight to the Cross, where we had four times as many as the other place could hold. Our enemies followed, and strove all the ways permitted them to annoy us. Neither their fire-works nor their water-works could stop the progress of the Gospel. I lifted up my voice like a trumpet, and many had ears to hear."

Several of Mr. Charles Wesley's most spirited hymns are supposed to have been written during this sojourn in the north. That, for instance, numbered 40 in the

* Jackson's Life of Charles Wesley, vol. i., p. 455.

Wesleyan Hymn-Book,* in which the triumphant progress of the Gospel is noted in glowing verse, he himself states to have been penned "after preaching to the Newcastle colliers." The hymn was in all likelihood written on the occasion thus referred to in his Journal :—"Sunday, November 30th. I went into the streets of Newcastle, and called the poor, the lame, the halt, the blind, with that precious promise, 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.' They had no feeling of the sharp frost, while the love of Jesus warmed their hearts."

"The very animated and emphatic hymn," observes Mr. Jackson, "beginning,

'See, how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace,'

was also written on the joyful occasion of his ministerial success, and that of his fellow-labourers, in Newcastle and its vicinity. Perhaps the imagery was suggested by the large fires connected with the collieries, which illuminate the whole of that part of the country in the darkest nights." Indeed, many of these incomparable hymns would be read with tenfold interest, if the circumstances in which they were at first penned were generally known. To his heaven-inspired muse our Societies and congregations owe much. In the well-known "Collection of Hymns," the greater part of which was composed by him, well nigh every doctrine of revelation, as well as every phase of religious experience, is presented in pleasing verse; whilst by this "metrical liturgy" the wants of our church, whether as to the requirements of social or of public devotion, are fully met. To the constant use of these truly scriptural and beautiful lyrics

* The first stanza runs thus,—

"Ye neighbours and friends, to Jesus draw near;
His love condescends, by titles so dear,
To call and invite you His triumph to prove,
And freely delight you in Jesus's love."

an almost uniform correctness of religious sentiment among the Wesleyan Methodists may, to a great extent, be traced.

In the spring of 1747, Mr. Wesley spends several weeks at his favourite domicile, the Orphan-House. The stewards of the Society, as well as the inmates of that establishment, give him perfect satisfaction. The former he represents as being "of one heart and mind;" whilst all in the House he finds "of the same spirit, pouring out their souls to God many times in a day together, and breathing nothing but love and brotherly kindness." But the Society, though formerly twice as many in number, is found, on a somewhat rigorous examination, to be reduced to four hundred members. Some consolation is, however, derived from the old proverb, that "the half is more than the whole." "We shall not be ashamed," writes he, "of any of these, when we speak with our enemies in the gate."

His mode of conducting these examinations is graphically presented, when, in answer to an objection, that it was impossible to distinguish between the precious and the vile, he remarks that only two things are requisite: "First, courage and steadiness in the examiner; secondly, common sense, and common honesty, in the leader of each class. I visit, for instance," continues he, "the class in the Close, of which Robert Peacock is leader. I ask, Does this and this person in your class live in drunkenness, or any outward sin? Does he go to church, and use the other means of grace? Does he meet you as often as he has opportunity? Now, if Robert Peacock has common sense, he can answer these questions truly; and if he has common honesty, he will. And if not, some other in the class has both, and can and will answer for him. Where is the difficulty, then, of finding out if there be any disorderly walker in this class; and consequently in any other? The question is not concern-

ing the heart, but the life. And the general tenor of this, I do not say, cannot be known, but cannot be *hid* without a miracle."

Mr. Wesley's perfect serenity of mind, and his entire satisfaction with the religious state and co-operation of those around him, are pleasingly manifest in the following entry made in his Journal, on Thursday, the 19th of March :—"I considered, 'What should I do now, if I was sure I had but two days to live?' All outward things are settled to my wish : the houses at Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle are safe ; the Deeds whereby they are conveyed to the trustees took place on the 5th instant ; my will is made : what have I more to do, but to commend my soul to my merciful and faithful Creator?" Happy they who thus live in holy readiness to exchange worlds !—who, with the poet of *our* Israel, can truly sing,—

"When Thou wilt, the blessing give,
Call us up Thy face to see :
Only let Thy servants live,
And let us die, to Thee!"

After visiting the several Societies in the neighbourhood, Mr. Wesley repeats his scrutiny of the members connected with the Orphan-House ; and finds what he calls "an odd hindrance of brotherly love" creeping in among them ; "namely, a fancy that they must not justify themselves. Just contrary to the scriptural injunction, 'Be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in you.' For want of doing this in time, some offences were now grown incurable. I found it needful to tear up this by the roots ; to explain this duty from the foundation ; and to require all who desired to remain with us, to justify themselves whenever they were blamed unjustly, and not to swallow up both peace and love in their voluntary humility." The care thus taken to preserve his Societies right, *doctrinally*, as well as *practically*, is deserving of notice : nor was his sphere of ministerial

influence and effort confined to them. At his farewell sermon, on Monday, April 20th, so many of "the finest people" were present, that he was led to exclaim, "Surely, God is working a new thing in the earth. Even to the rich the Gospel is preached."

What number of persons constituted the Orphan-House family,* or by what means they were supported, we have now no means of ascertaining. Several were, doubtless, maintained at Mr. Wesley's sole expense; others, whilst allowed a residence there, supported themselves by their own exertions. Of this latter class, was Jeannie Keith, a poor but eminently pious woman, whose name is perpetuated with honour in the early volumes of the "Arminian Magazine." Two letters, addressed by her to Mr. Wesley, are there given. The first, bearing date, May 17th, 1747, fully corroborates the representation as to the highly satisfactory state of the Orphan-House establishment. The second is characterized by such artless simplicity of spirit and style, that no hesitation is felt in presenting it without curtailment. This letter is inscribed by Mr. Wesley, "From a poor, happy woman, then living in the Orphan-House."

" Newcastle, November 1, 1748.

" REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

" I THINK we never had a more blessed time in this house, since it was a house. I know of nothing amiss between Sister M—— and me; but we cannot be of one soul, as you express it; for you know she must

* Of two of the number, the following record is found in Mr. Atmore's MS. Journal:—"Sunday, January 31st, 1790. I buried at 'the Ballast-Hills' poor old Nelly Dixon, who has been in the Orphan-House nearly thirty years.

" May 2d, 1790. This morning, about eight o'clock, old Rebecca Proctor exchanged the cross for a crown of glory. She has lived in the Orphan-House above forty years, and has been a worthy member of the Society. She died in much peace, and now rests from her labours."

have a little pre-eminence. I am exceeding willing that she should ; and so we live in great peace, and, I believe, in love.

“ You may expect plain dealing from me ; and if I thought you distrusted me, I would not write ; but I am fully persuaded you do not ; and therefore, why should I hide a heart from you, that is quite uncovered before the all-seeing eyes of God ? I may possibly deal too openly with others ; but I am fully convinced, I never can with you. Nay, I could heartily wish that you saw all that is in my heart : you could then be a better judge of it than I am myself.

“ I know not how to agree to the *not working*. I am still unwilling to take anything from anybody. I work out of choice ; having never yet learned how long a woman can be idle and innocent. I have had as blessed times in my soul, as ever I had in my life ; especially in the night-time, when I see nothing but the light of a candle and a white cloth, and hear nothing but the sound of my own breath : with God in my sight, and heaven in my soul, I think myself one of the happiest creatures below the skies. I do not complain that God has not made me some fine thing to be set up to be gazed at ; but I can heartily bless Him that He has made me just what I am, —a creature capable of the enjoyment of Himself. If I go to the window and look out, I see the moon and stars ; I meditate awhile on the silence of the night, consider this world as a beautiful structure, the work of an Almighty hand ; then I sit down to work again, and think myself one of the happiest beings in it. I do not murmur because I have not what they call goods of fortune, or a little skin-deep beauty ; but I am happy, because as long as God lives, I shall enjoy Him ; so long as there is a heaven, I shall possess it. If this thought cannot make me happy, without anything else, I deserve to be miserable. Then, how can I enough adore that

Redeemer, who bought all these privileges for me with His own blood ? But here words fail me, and I can say no more. I sink deep into my own nothingness, and cry out with astonishment, 'O, what has God done for me !'

"O, pray for me, that I may no more be found unfaithful. Dear Sir, pray for me, that I may be always watchful and serious; that all my conversation may adorn the Gospel. To the Divine protection I commit that which is dearest to me on earth, and remain

"Your affectionate loving child,

"JEANNIE KEITH."

Respecting the subsequent career of this interesting woman, but little is known. The letters to which reference is just made, were inserted in the Magazine some years after her decease; yet, in a communication from Mr. Wesley to John Downes, intimation is given that she had previously ceased to be the eminently devoted Christian she once was.

Some days before Mr. Wesley's departure from Newcastle, JOSEPH COWNLEY, one of his earliest and most successful helpers, had reached the Orphan-House; and to him the care of the Society and congregation was, for upwards of sixteen months, entrusted. This eminently placid yet devoted minister was born at Leominster, in the year 1723, and in early life became the subject of strong religious impressions. Although restrained by preventing grace from gross and outward sin, the evil tendencies of his heart gave him great uneasiness: under a painful apprehension of the Divine displeasure, he suffered much. Whilst visiting Bath, in the capacity of magistrates' clerk, his mind, under the preaching of Wesley, was graciously enlightened. The righteousness in which he had previously trusted was felt to be a false foundation for his hope; and, whilst pleading in the language of the publican, "God be merciful to me, a

sinner!" he realized "the righteousness which is of God by faith." Soon after, he felt it to be his duty, as opportunity served, to call sinners to repentance; and at the Conference of 1746 he was formally received by Mr. Wesley, as an accredited "helper." A kind of ordination, not afterwards continued, then took place. Mr. Cownley having kneeled down, Mr. Wesley placed a copy of the New Testament in his hand, and, after pronouncing, "Take thou authority to preach the Gospel," gave his solemn benediction.

Mr. Cownley's first appointment was at Bristol, where his labours were greatly owned of God. Early in the year 1747 he encountered the persecution then raging at Darlaston and Wednesbury; and, after visiting the Societies in Cornwall, took up his abode at the Orphan-House, Newcastle. By the Methodists throughout the north he was cordially welcomed; and under his affectionate yet faithful ministrations many were converted from the error of their ways. On leaving Newcastle, Mr. Cownley spent some months in Ireland, labouring chiefly in Dublin and Cork. At the latter place, the mob, headed by a barbarian ballad-singer, named Butler, attacked the congregation "with stones, and clubs, and swords;" so that the lives of all were placed in imminent peril. Here, with Mr. Charles Wesley, and others, he is presented by the grand jury as "a person of ill fame and a vagabond;" though, by a singular misnomer, termed in the indictment "Joseph McAuliff."

In 1752, Mr. Cownley was associated with the Messrs. Wesley and others in the following agreement; which, Mr. Jackson justly observes, "is a fine illustration of the spirit of those blessed men whom the God of all grace employed as a means of reviving religion in these lands; and is worthy of being preserved for the moral benefit of Christians in general, and especially of those who are united together in the holy ministry:”—

“ January 29, 1752.

“ It is agreed by us whose names are underwritten,

“ 1. That we will not listen or willingly inquire after any ill concerning each other.

“ 2. That if we do hear of any ill of each other, we will not be forward to believe it.

“ 3. That as soon as possible, we will communicate what we hear, by speaking or writing, to the person concerned.

“ 4. That till we have done this, we will not write or speak a syllable of it to any other person whatsoever.

“ 5. That neither will we mention it, after we have done this, to any other person.

“ 6. That we will not make any exception to any of these rules, unless we think ourselves absolutely obliged in conscience so to do.

“ JOHN WESLEY, JONATHAN REEVES, JOHN DOWNES,
CHAS. WESLEY, JOSEPH COWNLEY, JOHN JONES,
JOHN TREMBATH, CHAS. PERRONET, JOHN NELSON,
EDW. PERRONET, THOMAS MAXFIELD, WILLM. SHENT,
JOHN HAIME.”

In the month of October, 1755, Mr. Cownley is united in marriage with Miss Massiot, an eminently pious and devoted member of the Society at Cork. The year following, being incapacitated by illness for the toilsome duties of the Itinerancy, he returns to Newcastle, where for a season he had apartments in the Orphan-House.

With the exception of one year spent in Scotland, under the direction of Mr. Wesley, this distinguished preacher laboured, as strength permitted, to the close of an extended life, in the northern Districts.* “ Wherever

* “ In one of his excursions into the Dales, he was insulted by a mob, headed by a clergyman. Warm from the village-tavern, this zealous son of the Church, with the collected rabble, advanced to the field of action. Mr. Cownley was preaching near the door of an honest Quaker, when the minister insisted that he was breaking the order of the

he came, he was received as a servant of God. The Lord owned and blessed his labours among the people :" so that, for years after his removal to a happier world, his name was held in highest esteem. To the preachers, when visiting the Orphan-House, or when itinerating in the neighbourhood, he was a "centre of union :" by them he was treated "with the reverence due to a father," rather than with the familiarity inspired and sanctioned by the brotherly relation.

In the Sacramental controversy, which commenced as early as the year 1755, and was not finally settled till some time after the Wesleys had terminated their life and labours, Mr. Cownley felt a lively interest. He was, indeed, one of the foremost in claiming for the Methodist Societies, in this respect, their right and privilege, as a section of the church of Christ. Associated with him in this movement were Edward and Charles Perronet, sons of the venerated vicar of Shoreham ; and also Thomas Walsh, eminent alike for biblical scholarship and piety, and possessing in a high degree Mr. Wesley's esteem and confidence. These good men, and other preachers also, not only absented themselves from the services of the Established Church, but went so far as to administer the Lord's Supper to those who were like-minded with them, and also to one another.*

Church, and began to read the canon against conventicles. Mr. Cownley replied, 'If I am disorderly, you are not immaculate ;' and reminded him of the canon 'for sober conversation, and against frequenting ale-houses.' Confounded with the application, the parson retired for awhile ; but, mustering up his courage, he returned, and, with threats of prosecution, began to take down the names of the hearers. A Quaker, who was one of the congregation, hearing the alarming denunciation, stepped up, and with unruffled gravity clapped the parson on the back, and said, 'Friend John, put my name down first !' This ended the contest. Quite disconcerted, the clergyman withdrew, and left Mr. Cownley to finish his discourse in peace."—*Lives of Early Methodist Preachers*, vol. i., p. 108.

* On the points then in dispute, the Society at Newcastle was also

The uneasiness then felt and manifested will excite but little surprise, when it is borne in recollection that many of the clergy of that day were not only strangers to vital godliness, but grossly immoral in their lives and conversation. Others were instigators of persecuting mobs, and authors of many painful annoyances, under which the Methodists suffered greatly. In numerous instances, moreover, the followers of Wesley were not permitted, how much soever they might desire it, to participate in the Sacraments of the Church; but, when daring to approach the table of the Lord, were rudely repelled. Many became Dissenters, not from any change of sentiment as to the rites or constitution of the Church, but in order to obtain that spiritual edification which "the Church as by law established" failed to impart. "I cannot," writes Mr. Wesley to his brother Charles, "answer the arguments on this side of the question. Joseph Cownley says, 'For such and such reasons, I dare not hear a drunkard preach, or read prayers.' I answer, 'I dare; but I cannot answer his reasons.' For a season, through Mr. Wesley's influence, these offending brethren engaged to refrain from administering the Lord's Supper, even among themselves; yet, eventually, the question assumed so serious an aspect, that he was led to ordain several of his preachers, to administer the Sacraments in England and Scotland, wherever they might deem it necessary.

The first ordinations performed by Mr. Wesley had reference to the provinces of North America, when

agitated. "Tuesday, May 13th, 1755," Mr. Wesley writes, "I rode on to Newcastle. I did not find things in the order I expected. Many were on the point of leaving the Church, which some had done already, and, as they supposed, on my authority. In the following week, I spake to the members of the Society generally, and find far fewer than I expected prejudiced against the Church. I think, not forty in all; and I trust the plague is now stayed."

separated from the mother-country, and erected into independent States. On the 2d of September, 1784, by imposition of hands, and by prayer, he set apart Dr. Coke, to act in conjunction with Mr. Asbury, as General Superintendent of the Societies there. On the same day he also ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, to officiate as elders, under their direction. The following year, to meet the necessity which had arisen at home, he set apart, on the 2d of August, by solemn ordination, Messrs. Pawson, Hanby, and Joseph Taylor, "for the office of presbyter in the church of God." In 1786, July 29th, William Warrener, Charles Atmore, William Emmett, and Joseph Keighley received a similar ordination;—that of Mr. Cownley taking place on the 4th of June, 1788, and that of Mr. Mather, shortly after. The last ordination by Mr. Wesley occurred on the 27th of February, 1789, when Messrs. Moore and Rankin received a similar designation and appointment. All these ordinations took place at the early hour of four in the morning; and, with the exception of that of Dr. Coke, were preceded by ordination to the office of deacon.

The following copy of the certificate of Mr. Moore's ordination, as published by himself, will be read with interest:—

"Know all men by these presents, that I, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College, in Oxford, Presbyter of the Church of England, did on the day of the date hereof, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) set apart Henry Moore, for the office of a Presbyter in the church of God; a man whom I judge qualified to feed the flock of Christ, and to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to the usage of the Church of England; and, as such, I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this twenty-seventh day of February,

in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine.

“ JOHN WESLEY.

“ Present and assisting :

“ JAMES CREIGHTON, } *Presbyters of the Church of*
PEARD DICKENSON, } *England.*”

Mr. Cownley was indeed one of the excellent of the earth ; “ of eminent piety, and remarkable seriousness.” “ His love to his brethren and the church of God,” writes one who knew him well, “ is as worthy of imitation, as it is above all praise.” Mr. Wesley was wont to characterize him as “ one of the best preachers in England.” “ Persuasion hung upon his lips, and at times he appeared to speak with an authority more than human. Alternately he was a son of thunder and of consolation. By the terrors of the Lord he persuaded men ; and by the application of the promises he confirmed the wavering, and comforted the doubting believer.” For nearly forty years, he may be regarded as the Orphan-House minister ; having delivered in that hallowed spot several thousands of sermons. Every Tuesday and Thursday evening he was wont to occupy the pulpit, and frequently also on the Lord’s-day morning : yet it was generally remarked, “ Mr. Cownley has always something new.”

His end was suited to his life ; exhibiting unwavering confidence in God, and, although in constant pain, patient submission to His will. To his physician, who exhorted him in the extremity of his pain not to be afraid, he said, “ The fear of death has long since been removed. I am not afraid to die ; but I am afraid lest I should become impatient under this affliction.” When the doctor withdrew, he exclaimed with great fervour, “ Jesus ! I am Thine. Thou art my Physician ! But, if it be Thy will, and I have finished the work Thou hast committed to me, then take me to Thyself.” On the evening of Monday,

October 8th, 1792, he reclined his head on the chair, and without a struggle or a groan entered into rest.

"Death broke at once the vital chain,
And forced the soul the nearest way."*

From 1747 to 1750 the Orphan-House Society, under the successive oversight of Joseph Cownley, Christopher Hopper, and John Downes, not only increased in number, but, on the testimony of Mr. Wesley, had "more of the life and power of religion" than he had ever found before. Monthly watchnights—that is, meetings for exhortation and prayer, commencing at seven in the evening, and ending between nine and ten o'clock—were established, not only in Newcastle, but in the several Societies of the neighbourhood.

In the month of July, 1748, Mr. Wesley journeys northward as far as Berwick. On his way thither, he preaches at the Cross in Morpeth; several at first opposing, but "the congregation softening more and more, till toward the close the far greater part" are "exceedingly serious and attentive." In the evening, at Widdrington, under the shade of large trees, a large company is gathered together. "Every man hung upon the word; none stirred his head or hand, or looked to the right or left, while the preacher declared in strong terms 'the grace of our Lord

* In the Conference obituary of 1793, his ministerial associates record:—"This venerable man began his ministry in 1744. In filling up the duties of his station, he was fervent and diligent. In doing this, he had to combat some of the most painful infirmities of human nature. His abilities as a preacher were very uncommon; a peculiar unction generally attended his word; his seriousness was almost proverbial; and he lived and died a copy of the truths he taught. He sought out the retreats of wretchedness, and was found

"Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely want retired to die."

In him the Society lost a faithful pastor, and the world a burning and shining light."

Jesus Christ.” At Alnmouth, the day following, he finds the people “sinners convict, having nothing to pay.” To these, also, he makes known the salvation which is in Christ. In the evening, he preaches at Alnwick Cross, to a large congregation. “All were moved a little, but none very much. The waters spread wide, but not deep.” At Berwick, on the 20th, by permission of the commander of the garrison, he preaches on a green place, near the officer’s house, to nearly two thousand people, and finds the generality of them just such as he expected,—“serious and decent, but not easy to be convinced of anything. For who,” inquires he, “can tell them what they did not know before?” In none of these places has Methodism exerted any extensive influence or taken deep root.

At the Conference held this year in London, November 16th, one of the helpers in each Circuit (then designated the assistant, but now the superintendent) was appointed to take charge of the several Societies therein. In this capacity, John Downes appears as the first “assistant” in the Newcastle Circuit; part of his duty being, “to hold Quarterly Meetings, and therein to inquire diligently into the spiritual and temporal state of each Society.” But, as meetings of this kind were of very recent date, John Bennet is directed to go “as soon as may be, to Newcastle and Wednesbury,” and teach the Societies “the nature and method” of such assemblies. Other engagements, it would seem, prevented this; since, under date of May 4th, 1753, Mr. Wesley records,—“We had the first general Quarterly Meeting of all the stewards round about Newcastle, in order thoroughly to understand both the spiritual and temporal state of each Society.”

The Quarterly Meeting, though possessing no disciplinary powers, may now be regarded as one of the most important Circuit arrangements of Wesleyan Methodism.*

* The functions of the Quarterly Meeting are, in brief, as follows:—The finances of the Circuit are under its direction and control. No

When first established, it comprised simply the preachers and stewards of the respective Circuits. In process of time, —as a right established by usage,—other office-bearers were considered as entitled to attend, and take part in the proceedings; till, at the Conference of 1852, it was declared that the following parties and no others should be recognised as members of the Quarterly Meeting:—

- “ 1. All the ministers and preachers on trial in the Circuit, and the supernumeraries whose names appear in the printed Minutes of the Conference.
- “ 2. The circuit-stewards, all the society-stewards, and the poor-stewards.
- “ 3. All the class-leaders in the Circuit.
- “ 4. All the local preachers of three years' continuous standing, after having been twelve months on trial; they being resident members of Society in the Circuit.
- “ 5. All the trustees of chapels situate in places named on the Circuit-Plan; such trustees being resident members of Society in the Circuit.”

The platform of the Quarterly Meeting is thus extended quite as far as is consistent with the scriptural exercise of ministerial authority and influence.

In September, 1749, Whitehaven is added to the Newcastle “round;” Mr. Wesley having preached there on the chapel or school can be erected or enlarged without its sanction. Its approval is necessary in order to any candidate for the ministry being recommended by the superintendent to the Conference. No division of the Circuit, involving the formation of a new Circuit, can be carried into effect without its consent. The operation of any new rule, affecting the Societies at large, can by its decision be set aside in the Circuit for one year. No circuit-steward can be appointed without its concurrence.—The Quarterly Meeting possesses the right of making preliminary engagements as to the ministerial supply for the Circuit, and of petitioning the Conference in reference thereto; and also, at its June session, of memorializing the Conference on any Connexional subject. If in any Circuit no local-preachers' meeting is held, the candidate must be proposed and approved at the Quarterly Meeting.

22d instant. "The work," he remarks, "runs with a swift and a wide stream, but it does not go deep. A considerable part of the town seems moved, but extremely few are awake; and scarce three have found a sense of the pardoning love of God, from the time of the first preaching to this day."

In October of this year, after the marriage of Grace Murray with John Bennet, Mr. Wesley spends a few days in Newcastle. The following extract from his Journal, whilst indicating the satisfactory state of the Orphan-House Society, gives evidence how quickly he had risen superior to a disappointment, which must have been to him most painful:—"Wednesday, October 11th. I rejoiced to find that God was still carrying on His work. Both in the morning and evening, the hearts of many burned within them, while they were assembled in His name; and they felt His word to be 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.'

"Friday, October 13th.—At the meeting of the select Society, such a flame broke out as was never there before. We felt such a love to each other as we could not express; such a spirit of supplication, and such a glad acquiescence in all the providences of God, and confidence that He would withhold from us no good thing."

From a letter addressed by Mr. Charles Wesley to "Mr. Blackwell, banker, in Change-alley, London,"—the mutual friend of the Wesleys,—it appears that the paroxysm of painful feeling, caused by the part taken by Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Whitefield in the marriage of Grace Murray, was soon subdued. Southey, in his Life of the founder of Methodism, observes that "resentment was a plant that *could never take root in the heart of Wesley.*" The whole of his history is certainly in evidence that it *never did*. The letter here given is interesting, also, as presenting the only reminiscence of the celebrated Whitefield in connexion with the Orphan-House, Newcastle:—

“ Sheffield, Sunday morning, October 8th, 1749.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I SNATCH a few moments before the people come, to tell you what you will rejoice to know,—that the Lord is reviving His work as at the beginning; that multitudes are daily added to His church; and that George Whitefield, my brother, and I, are one—a threefold cord which shall no more be broken. The week before last I waited on our friend George to our house in Newcastle, and gave him full possession of our pulpit and people’s hearts, as full as was in my power to give. The Lord united all our hearts. I attended his successful ministry for some days. He was never more blessed, or better satisfied. Whole troops of the Dissenters he mowed down. They also are reconciled to us, as you cannot conceive. The world is confounded. The hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. At Leeds we met my brother, who gave honest George the right hand of fellowship, and attended him everywhere to our Societies. Some at London will be alarmed at the news; but it is the Lord’s doing, as they, I doubt not, will by and by acknowledge.

“ My dear friends, Mrs. Blackwell and Mrs. Dewal, shall have the full account not many days hence, if the Lord bless my coming in as He has blessed my going out. On the next Lord’s day I shall rejoice to see you at His table. Remember, at all times of access,

“ Your faithful and affectionate servant in the Gospel,

“ CHARLES WESLEY.”

CHAPTER V.

1751—1769.

Prosperous state of the Orphan-House Society—Jonathan Maskew—Thomas Mitchell—Difficulty of forming a Society at Alnmouth—Case of Mrs. Armstrong, of Whickham—Singular custom at Alnwick—First formal appointment of preachers to the Newcastle Circuit—Death of Mrs. Hopper—Efforts of Mr. Wesley to put down the practice of smuggling at Sunderland—Pastoral letters of Mr. Grimshaw—William Darney—Thomas Olivers—Entire sanctification sought after—Tendency towards Dissent—Miss Lewen, of Durham—Her legacy to Mr. Wesley—Matthew Lowes—Moseley Cheek—Death of Alexander Coates—Henry Jackson—William Mackford—John Haughton—Thomas Richards—Henry Thornton—Total extinction of chapel-debts—Elizabeth Hobson—Mr. William Smith—The step-grand-daughters of Mr. Wesley—Remarkable preservation of Mr. Wesley, with Mrs. Smith and her children.

A LONGER interval than usual took place, ere the Orphan-House was again visited by its founder. On Sunday, April 21st, 1751, Mr. Wesley, after preaching there morning and afternoon, states in his Journal,—“The spirit of the people refreshed me much, as it almost always does. I wish all our Societies were likeminded; as loving, simple, and zealous of good works.”

During his protracted absence, the northern Societies, as previously intimated, were successively under the care of Messrs. Cownley, Hopper, and Downes; “helpers,” who enjoyed the entire confidence of their ecclesiastical head. The tax imposed upon their mental energies must have been somewhat severe, if each, during his location at the Orphan-House, was expected to tread in the steps of the zealous Hopper. “I preached,” writes he, “every evening at seven, and every morning at five o’clock, and often at noon-day; the common work of a Methodist preacher.”

The year following, Jonathan Maskew and Thomas Mitchell are appointed to this northern sphere of labour. The former, by "his plain and pathetic preaching,"* is generally acceptable, and useful to many; the latter, having recently suffered unwonted persecution at Wrangle, in Lincolnshire, where he narrowly escaped with his life, finds, in his appointment to the "canny" Societies of the north, a most gratifying change. "After all the storms I had gone through," writes he, "I was greatly refreshed among a loving, peaceable people, with whom I laboured with much satisfaction."

During the summer, Mr. Wesley spends several weeks in Newcastle and the neighbourhood. The Society at Sunderland is characterized by him as "one of the liveliest in the north of England;" and this he regards as "the effect of their being so much 'under the law,' as to scruple, one and all, the buying even of milk on a Sunday." At Alnmouth, he is led to exclaim, "How plain an evidence have we here, that even our outward work, even the Societies, are not of man's building! With all our labour and skill, we cannot, in nine years' time, form a Society in this place; even though there is none that opposes, poor or rich: nay, though the two richest men in the town, and the only gentlemen there, have done all which was in their power to further it." At Whickham, he records an interesting incident in the case of Mrs. Armstrong, before whose door he preached. Her husband, in consequence of a debt contracted by his son, had been thrown into

* Of this good man Mr. Wesley was wont to say, "Ten such preachers as Jonathan Maskew would carry the world before them." He remained in the Itinerancy only a few years; but to a good old age was usefully employed as a local preacher in the neighbourhood of Rochdale. His last hours presented one unbroken scene of holy triumph. When sinking in the arms of death, he appeared to be favoured with a glimpse of the heaven that awaited him. His countenance became radiant with joy; and, raising one of his hands, he exclaimed to his son, "Look, James, look!" and passed away.

gaol, and had there died. At fourscore years of age, she was thus on the point of losing all that she had. Still the oracles of God, which she had loved from a child, were her delight, and her counsellors. But one day, when she put on her spectacles to read, she could not see a word. She was startled at first, but soon said, 'It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.' She laid her spectacles down, and, casting her eye on the corner of the Bible, thought she could discern some letters. Taking up the book, she read as well as her daughter could; and from that hour, she could not only read without spectacles, but sew, or thread the finest needle, with the same ease as when she was thirty years of age."

In April, 1753, Mr. Wesley, on his route from Edinburgh to Newcastle, calls at Alnwick on the day (St. Mark's) when those who had served their apprenticeship, as well as the sons of freemen who had attained their majority, were made free of the corporation. "Sixteen or seventeen, we were informed," writes he, "were to receive their freedom this day; and, in order thereto, (such is the unparalleled wisdom of the present corporation, and their forefathers,) to walk through a bog, (purposely preserved for the occasion; otherwise, it might have been drained long ago,) which takes up some of them to the neck, and many of them to the breast." Through the operation of the Municipal Corporations' Act, this foolish custom is now abolished. The ceremony, in its compulsory aspect, is traced to an order of King John; who, when hunting in the neighbourhood, was set fast in a bog. On learning that the land belonged to a freeman of Alnwick, he declared that every one who in future should be constituted a freeman of the town should pass through the self-same bog!

The first *formal* appointment* of preachers to the New-

* In Appendix D a list is given of the preachers successively appointed to the Newcastle Circuit, together with the number in Society, as reported from year to year.

castle Circuit occurs in a MS. record of the Conference which began, in Leeds, on the 22d of May, 1753; when Christopher Hopper, John Hampson, Jonathan Catlow, and Jacob Rowell were entrusted with the care of the northern Societies: but whether each remained in the Newcastle "round" throughout the year, is, perhaps, uncertain. Many changes took place at this period, under Mr. Wesley's sanction, during the interim of the assembling of the Conference. The arrangement thus made seems to have rendered less necessary Mr. Wesley's personal supervision of the work. Not till May, 1755, is he again at Newcastle; when, "to the astonishment of some of the warm men," and to the "no small amazement and displeasure of some of their zealous countrymen," Mr. Wardrobe, minister of Bathgate, in Scotland, and Mr. Gillies, of Glasgow, occupy at his request the Orphan-House pulpit.

The ministerial appointment for 1755 was Christopher Hopper, (who also had resided at the Orphan-House the year preceding,) James Massiott, Matthew Lowes, James Wild, and John Turnmough. The death of Mrs. Hopper, which occurred on the 15th of August, when she triumphantly entered into rest, elicited from Mr. Wesley the following letter, dated "September 12th, 1755;" in which his sympathy for the bereaved gives rise to suggestions and counsel admirably adapted to sustain the mind in every season of providential darkness:—

"**MY DEAR BROTHER,**

"THE Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; and wise are all His ways. The great point is, to understand the design of His gracious wisdom, and to answer and fulfil that design. One thing is certain: He calls you to a more full and absolute dedication of your soul and body to Him. He calls you to converse with Him more in prayer and meditation. In the former, we more

directly speak to God; in the latter, He speaks to us. And every possible loss is gain, if it produces this blessed effect.

“ Consider yourself as now more than ever married to Christ, and His dear people: then for this kindly severe dispensation you shall praise Him for ever.”

In another communication, dated “October 8th, 1755,” he adds:—

“ You have one business on earth, to save souls. Give yourself wholly to this. Fulfil the work of a preacher, and an assistant, as you never did before. Be another Thomas Walsh. Pursue the whole of scriptural Christianity. Stand upon the edge of this world, ready to take wing; having your feet on earth, your eyes and heart in heaven.

“ I am
“ Your affectionate friend and brother,
“ JOHN WESLEY.”

For some years subsequent, little is on record as to progress at the Orphan-House. The Society of colliers at Plessey—a place Mr. Wesley loved to visit—are spoken of as “a pattern to all the Societies in England. No person ever misses his band or class: they have no jar among them, but with one heart and one mind provoke one another to love and good works.” In Sunderland, an evil often prevalent in seaport-towns gives Mr. Wesley some uneasiness. “ I met the Society,” he writes, June 16th, 1757, “ and told them plain, none could stay with us unless he would part with all sin; particularly, robbing the king, selling or buying run goods; which I could no more suffer than robbing upon the highway. This I enforced on every member the next day. A few would not promise to refrain: so these I was forced to cut off. About two hundred and fifty were of a better mind.” The fearless-

ness with which Mr. Wesley attacked sin in every form and under every guise, together with his unflinching resolve to keep his Societies pure, tended greatly to the stability and permanency of that revival of scriptural Christianity of which, under God, he was the great instrument. Yet, in many instances, the courage and fidelity of this devoted man were severely tested; especially in the putting down of certain evils, the sinfulness of which was scarcely apprehended, and with which the popular mind had long been familiarized. After a lapse of two years, when spending some weeks in Newcastle and the neighbourhood, he preaches on the 9th of June, 1759, in the shell of the "new house" at Sunderland; and some days after, on speaking "to each of the Society" there, he states, "Most of the robbers, commonly called smugglers, have left us; but more than twice the number of honest people have already come in their place. And if none had come, yet should I not dare to keep those who steal either from the king or subject."

The Societies connected with the Orphan-House and its Circuit number at this period about eighteen hundred members. Of the collier-society at Gateshead Mr. Wesley speaks in terms of high approval. "In earnestness they utterly shame the colliers at Kingswood; scarce thirty of whom think it worth their while to hear the word of God on a week-day, not even when I preach. And here, the house will scarce contain the week-day congregation of a local preacher."

The Rev. WILLIAM GRIMSHAW, the somewhat eccentric yet highly-useful incumbent of Haworth, near Keighley, having been solicited to visit the northern Societies, finds himself unable to comply with their request; and, in lieu of advices from the pulpit, addresses several pastoral letters "to the Christian brethren in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and elsewhere in the north." From one of these, dated, "Haworth, January 27th, 1761," we extract the

following, not only as illustrative of the spirit and bearing of the whole, but as offering suggestions which every Christian reader would do well to ponder; though the hours prescribed for certain duties may scarcely be in unison with the altered habits of the age:—

“ “ PERMIT me to prescribe to you a method to live one day well; and this may serve for every day after. Nor will I presume to lay a burden upon you which I am averse to myself, or neglect to practise. Rise every morning at four o'clock, if you are well; but not later than five. Bless God for the mercies of the night past; praise Him for a new day, and pray for His blessing upon it. Examine well your own heart; meditate upon some spiritual subject; and, lastly, plan the business of the day. Then spend some time in private meditation, praise, and prayer. Next, call your family together; read a chapter in the Bible, and, as you have ability and leisure, expound a little of it; then sing a hymn, and conclude with prayer. Seek the blessing of God upon your food; and praise Him before and after every meal, for the mercies He provides for you. Begin and conclude every work with prayer. When you are employed in business, exercise your mind in meditation, prayer, and praise; or converse seriously and religiously with those about you. While you thus endeavour to devote every hour and every moment to God, instead of hindering your work, you will find the Divine blessing upon all the labour of your hands. As often as business will permit, retire a little for private prayer. It would be well to spend a few minutes in prayer with your family immediately after dinner. In the evening, constantly observe the same form of devotion with your family as in the morning. When you retire to rest, review the thoughts, words, and actions of the day. What you discover to have been amiss, humbly supplicate pardon for it from God; and do not dare to drop asleep, until

you have obtained forgiveness and peace: and give God all the glory for what has been right. Never neglect this, or some such method of daily walking with God."

One of the letters, to which reference is made above, was transmitted by WILLIAM DARNEY, then on his tour northwards. This eccentric individual, though not stationed at Newcastle till some years after, preached occasionally in the neighbourhood, and in some instances with much success. He is spoken of as "a man possessing few personal attractions; of a broad Scottish dialect; and, when dwelling on the terrors of the Lord, terrible to behold; but a man of deep piety, strong sense, and burning zeal, with a courage that fearlessly defied all opposition." The following incident, related in a memoir of Mr. Edward Stanley,* one of the first Methodists in Alnwick, is in proof that Darney's courageous temper was sometimes of service to him:—When he was preaching about this period at Alnwick, the word was made "the power of God" to the salvation of many. A company of strolling players, then in the neighbourhood, finding their craft in danger, were greatly annoyed: so much so, that when Darney was one day riding past their temporary theatre, —a barn which had been fitted up for the purpose of exhibition,—several of their number, who were lounging and basking in the sun, said in a tone sufficiently loud for him to hear, "Here is Scotch Will! let us mob him." On hearing this, Mr. Darney, (who was a man of prodigious size, and, when he chose, of a terrific countenance,) being mounted on a spirited horse, immediately rode up to them, and, making his horse stand upon its hinder feet,—at the same time elevating his whip,—said with a voice of thunder, "Ye sons of Belial, come on!" The poor actors became sadly frightened, and were thankful

* Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, 1826, p. 797.

to atone for their insolence by individually begging his pardon, and promising to behave better in all time to come. This they were careful to do; for no one after this ventured to insult him.

Darney's movements as an itinerant were somewhat erratic. Several Societies, formed by him in Yorkshire, bore for a season his name. He was in the habit, when in the pulpit, of giving out hymns composed by himself,*—frequently on the spur of the moment; which, though rarely rising beyond the level of what might be termed “doggerel,” added greatly to his popularity as a preacher. Rough work had in those days to be performed; and Darney was one of the rough ecclesiastical tools,—usefully, as well as providentially, employed. He died in peace at Colne, in Lancashire, about the year 1780.

At the Conference of 1760, Thomas Olivers is appointed to the charge of the Newcastle Circuit; a man of considerable ministerial ability, well skilled in controversy, and (as his celebrated poem, “The God of Abraham praise,” indicates) no mean poet. During his administration, much uneasiness, the cause of which is now unknown, existed in the Circuit. “Here,” says he, “I had many

* As a specimen of his poetic style, we give the following verses, taken from a “hymn” composed by him in 1751, and entitled, “The Progress of the Gospel in divers places of Great Britain:”—

19. “ Newcastle in Northumberland,
A church there planted is;
Which by the grace of God shall stand,
His holy name to praise.
20. “ Her branches now around doth spread,
The country towns all o'er;
They reach to Berwick-upon-Tweed,
Upon the Scottish shore.
21. “ In Whitehaven, we now do hear,
A glorious work's begun :
Ride on, Thou glorious Conqueror !
Thy work there carry on.”

mercies and comforts, and a few trials. In one place I was obliged to put thirty-five members out of the Society; and if I had not laboured hard, and exercised much patience, we should have lost about two hundred in that one place. But, though I had the express order of Mr. Wesley for what I did, and acted with great integrity on the one hand, and tenderness on the other, I lost many of my dearest friends, who from that time became my bitterest enemies. But I must say, in honour of the grace of God, that friends and enemies have always been alike to me, when I thought the glory of God was concerned." The following year Mr. Hopper is specially appointed, with a view to the restoration of peace and order. "If you do not establish good order in the Orphan-House," writes Mr. Wesley to him, "it is pity you should go there. This is the very design of your Master. For this end you are sent. Do just as I would do, in every instance, if I were in your place. Act just the thing that is right, whoever is pleased or displeased. I hereby give it under my hand, I will stand by you with all my might."

From the 14th of May, 1761, to the 14th of the month following, Mr. Wesley preaches in Newcastle and places adjacent. In several members of the Orphan-House Society he finds "a vehement desire" to be wholly conformed to the word and image of the Saviour; to realise what is so beautifully expressed in the sacramental collect of the Established Church,—"Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit; that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name." On inquiring how it was, that in all those parts there was scarce a living witness of this "full salvation,"* "I constantly received," says he, "from every

* Mr. Wesley's views on this important point are thus expressed:— "A Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin. This is the glorious privilege of *every* Christian; yea, though he be but a babe in

person one and the same answer: 'We see now, we sought it by our works; we thought it was to come gradually; we never expected to receive it in a moment, by faith, as we did justification.' What wonder is it, then," adds he, "that you have been fighting all these years as one that beateth the air?" Some time after, he found many who bore pleasing testimony to the truth, that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleaneth us from all sin." In 1765 he makes this record: "I scarce ever saw the people here so much alive to God; particularly those who believe they are saved from sin. I was ready to say, 'It is good for me to be here:' but I must not build tabernacles. I am to be a wanderer on earth, and desire no rest till my spirit returns to God."

Two entries in Mr. Wesley's Journal during this visit might awaken surprise, that, in opposition to the wishes and remonstrances of so many of his people, he still urged their continuing to attend the services of the Church. Not until convinced that otherwise the spiritual work of God would greatly suffer, if not, indeed, be altogether destroyed, did he at all relent. In Weardale, the Societies, "disgusted at the curate, whose life was no better than his doctrine," were just on the point of becoming Dissenters; and only in deference to Mr. Wesley's strongly-expressed judgment, to the contrary, were they restrained from doing so. On Monday, May 25th, he preaches at Shields, in an open place, to "a listening multitude;" and in the evening at South-Shields, to almost double the number. "How ripe for the Gospel," exclaims he, "are these also!"—and then adds,—what, from the lips of another, might almost be received as justifying secession from the Christ. But it is only of grown Christians it can be affirmed, they are in such a sense perfect as to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers, to be sanctified throughout; even to have 'a heart so flaming with the love of God,' (to use Archbishop Usher's words,) 'as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.'"

Church,—“What is wanting but more labourers? More! Why, is there not here (as in every parish in England) a particular minister who takes care of all their souls? There is one here who takes *charge* of all their souls; what *care* of them he takes, is another question. It may be, he neither knows nor cares whether they are going to heaven or hell. Does he ask man, woman, or child any question about it, from one Christmas to the next? O, what account will such a pastor give to the Great Shepherd in that day!” Nor was the case of Shields and its minister a solitary one; but rather illustrative of the moral destitution of the country at large. Hence are we led devoutly to adore the providence of God, in raising up, in the Wesleys and their zealous coadjutors, a band of noble men to sound the trumpet of alarm, and to rouse from semi-infidelity a slumbering church and nation.

On a subsequent visit to Newcastle, in 1764, Mr. Wesley becomes acquainted with Miss Lewen, of Durham; a lady of fortune, of whom he speaks, as being “a remarkable monument of Divine mercy.” After her conversion, she “broke through all hindrances, and joined heart and hand with the children of God.” Her piety was exemplary; whilst in works of benevolence and Christian zeal she cheerfully expended an ample income. In her will, she bequeathed to Mr. Wesley £1,000; at the same time suggesting the application of the whole, or part, at least, to the Orphan-House at Newcastle. He, however, preferred distributing the sum at once to persons whose necessities were immediate and pressing. His disinterestedness in its allocation is indicated in the following letter, addressed to his sister, Mrs. Hall, shortly after the money had come into his hands:—

“DEAR PATTY,

“You do not consider, money never stays with *me*: it would burn *me* if it did. I throw it out of my

hands as soon as possible, lest it should find a way into my heart. Therefore you should have spoken to me while I was in London, and before Miss Lewen's money flew away. However, I know not, but I may still spare you £5, provided you will not say, 'I will never ask you again;' because this is more than you can tell, and you must not promise more than you can perform.

"O, how busy are mankind! and about what trifles! Things that pass away as a dream. 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' but to love and serve God.

"I am, my dear Patty,
"Your ever-affectionate
"J. WESLEY."

In August, 1765, the "Stations of the Preachers" appear for the first time in the printed Minutes of the Conference. The appointment for Newcastle stands as under:—.

"Joseph Cownley; Christopher Hopper;
Matthew Lowes; Moseley Cheek."

Mr. Lowes travelled principally in the north of England, and with much success, till the year 1771; when, from failing health, he was located as a supernumerary preacher in Newcastle. He died in peace, on the 8th of February, 1794. Some of his last words were, "All my dependence for present and eternal salvation is upon the blood and merits of Jesus Christ." Mr. Cheek, after a few years, obtained Episcopal ordination, and became the minister of St. Stephen's church, Salford, Manchester.

The first ministerial death at the Orphan-House took place in the October of this year; when ALEXANDER COATES, then the oldest preacher in connexion with the Wesleys, was called to his reward. Coates was a native of North Britain, and at a very early period entered the Methodist Itinerancy. He is represented by those who

knew him, as “one of the best of men, and a most useful preacher.” Under his ministry, when he was stationed in London, Mr. Crosse, afterwards for many years the venerated vicar of Bradford, Yorkshire, was brought to a knowledge of “the truth as it is in Jesus.” Whilst the man of God was proclaiming “Christ crucified” as the only medium of the sinner’s approach to God, the heart of Crosse, as in the case of the founder of the Wesleyan Societies, was “strangely warmed;” “the love of God” was “shed abroad” in his heart “by the Holy Ghost” given unto him; he felt that Christ had taken away his sins, even his, and saved him from “the law of sin and death.”

One writing from the Orphan-House, October 7th, 1765, states: “I had an opportunity, the last evening, of seeing our aged Brother Coates. A few days before, he was sorely tempted by the enemy; but near the close he had perfect peace. His faith was clear; and he found Christ ‘precious,’—his portion, and his eternal all. I asked him, a little before he died, if he had followed ‘cunningly-devised fables?’ He answered, ‘No, no, no!’ I then asked him, whether he saw land? He said, ‘Yes, I do;’ and, after waiting for a few moments at anchor, he put into the quiet harbour.”

On the 20th of February, 1766, HENRY JACKSON, the first-named trustee of the Orphan-House, and a man of saintly life, enters triumphantly into rest. Mr. Wesley, on visiting him in May, 1764, makes pleasing mention of the interview. “I received much satisfaction in conversing with the most honourable member of our Society, Henry Jackson; now in the ninety-fifth or ninety-sixth year of his age. He put me in mind of that venerable man, Mr. Elliott of New-England, who frequently used to say to his friends, ‘My memory is gone, my understanding is gone; but I think I have more love than ever.’” “I had a little time,” adds he, a year later, “with that venerable

monument of the grace of God, Henry Jackson. He is just dropping into the grave, being now quite bed-ridden, but praising God with every breath."

His daughter, in a letter dated "Newcastle, February 23d, 1766," refers to the last illness of this truly Christian man: "On Thursday, the 13th of this month, my honoured father looked so beautiful and comely, that we all wondered. At night, in his first sleep, he was taken very ill. On Friday morning, I asked him, What he could take? He answered, 'I am to eat no more.' His illness increased; but he was still calm and composed, and resigned to the will of God. Indeed, I always beheld in him such faith, love, and Divine resignation, as I never saw in any other. On Sunday he said, 'Now my soul is prepared, and made ready to meet the Lord.' From this time, he was filled with longing desires to depart, and to be with Christ; crying out, 'I cannot stay; I must go to my Beloved, to be with Him for ever.' Monday, 17th, he said, 'I have fought a good fight: I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.' Tuesday, 18th, after receiving the blessed sacrament, he declared to the minister, 'My anchor is cast within the veil, both sure and immovable.' As long as he had his speech, he preached Christ to every one that came to see him: indeed, his whole life, for many years, was but one dedication of his body and soul to God; praying continually, and being lost in praise and thanksgiving to his adorable Saviour. In all the various dispensations of God's providence toward him and his family, he was still magnifying and praising His holy name; always thankful, humble, loving, and obedient. Nothing was able to move him one moment, or put him out of temper; but he received everything from the hand of God with faith, patience, and resignation. Before his speech failed, he

blessed all his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; and on Thursday morning, February the 20th, yielded up his soul to God; being ninety-nine years and five months old."

The co-trustees of Mr. Jackson, not hitherto biographically noticed, were William Mackford, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, and Henry Thornton.

Of MR. MACKFORD but little is on record. He was a man of highly-respectable character, and occasionally accompanied Mr. Wesley in his journeyings. In August, 1748, he is thus found at Roughlee, near Colne, in Lancashire, in company with Messrs. Grimshaw and Colbeck; when by an inhuman mob he is dragged by the hair of his head, and trampled in the mire; receiving personal injuries, from which he never fully recovered. His associates were also loaded with dirt and mire of every kind. "The other quiet, harmless people," writes Mr. Wesley, "who followed me at a distance, they treated full as ill. They poured upon them showers of dirt and stones, without any regard to age or sex. Many they beat with their clubs, without mercy. One, they forced to leap from a rock, ten or twelve feet high, into the river; and, when he crawled out, wet and bruised, were hardly persuaded not to throw him in again. Such was the recompense we frequently received from our countrymen for our labour of love." Mr. Mackford's devotedness and courage were, however, amply rewarded, when, on hearing Mr. Wesley the day following at Heptonstall-bank, near Todmorden, he became a partaker of Gospel-salvation; "the Spirit itself bearing witness" with his spirit, that he was "a child of God."

JOHN HAUGHTON, originally a weaver, was among the first lay preachers employed by Mr. Wesley. He entered the Itinerancy in 1741, and, with others of his day, was called to "endure hardness as a good soldier." In the Staffordshire riots and persecution, as well as in

the sister-isle some years after, he was exposed to much personal insult and injury: yet, when summoned before Lord Dudley, one of the magistrates of the county, he fared better than many of his fellows. "What has Mr. Haughton done?" inquired his lordship. "He preaches and prays extempore," was the answer. "Did he repeat the Lord's prayer?" "Yes, my lord." "Did he pray for the king?" "Yes." "Why, then, Mr. Haughton," decides his lordship, "you may go, and preach and pray wherever you please." He ceased to travel in 1760; and shortly after, obtaining Episcopal ordination, settled in Ireland. "Thursday, June 4, 1788," Mr. Wesley states, "I went to Kilrea, (Londonderry county,) and was cordially received by Mr. Haughton; once a travelling preacher; now a magistrate, and rector of a parish."

THOMAS RICHARDS was the second layman who offered to serve Mr. Wesley, "as a son in the Gospel." He was present at the second Conference held at Bristol, in 1745; but, some years after, he ceased to itinerate, and, under Lady Huntingdon's influence, entered the Church.

Of MR. THORNTON nothing has been ascertained, save that in a list of the members of Society connected with the Foundery, London, during the years 1745 and 1746, his name appears; and, also, that to him the Methodist people are in all likelihood indebted for the publication of the deeply-interesting "Journal" of the mason-preacher of Birstal. In one of the earliest editions of that work, bearing date 1767, is the following Preface; a copy of which has been kindly furnished by the Rev. Dr. Osborn:—

"THE following sheets were written at divers times for my own satisfaction. But, about seventeen years ago, when I was in the Newcastle round, I transcribed them into a book. Some of our friends saw them, and begged they might be printed; which I refused at that time, knowing my ignorance and inability.

“However, Mr. Thornton, the lawyer, heard of it, and desired me to let him see it; when he thought, as the case had been already published, and had been a means of stirring up many to hear the word, this might be of use, to comfort some that are in trouble; and advised me to put it to the press. I declined it for the present: but Mr. Thornton showed them to several friends at Leeds, who were of the same opinion, and pressed upon me to print it immediately; which I with much reluctance agreed to. And I pray that God may make it a blessing to all that read it: and if any receive benefit therefrom, the Lord shall have the glory; for to Him alone doth it belong.

“What is wrong, may the Lord pardon! And that no one may be hurt by me, or anything I have written or preached, is the sincere prayer of

“Their unworthy servant, for Christ’s sake,
“JOHN NELSON.”

Mr. Thornton, it is supposed, drew up the Deed of the Orphan-House, and also that of the chapel at Birstal. In both instances, from the defective character of the Deeds, disastrous results have followed.

At the Conference held in Leeds, August 12th, 1766, the “total debt for building,” throughout the Connexion, was reported to be £11,383. Under the apprehension of being “utterly ruined,”* if going on thus, the brethren agree to make a general and vigorous effort to liquidate the debt. A circular, bearing date of November 24th, 1767, is addressed by Mr. Wesley to the “assistants” and others, urging them to “set their shoulders to the work.” The canvassing of the northern Societies is spe-

* The alarm then felt will, perhaps, in this day excite a smile; especially when it is added, that only a few years ago, in an important town in the county of Lancaster, the debt resting on two chapels amounted to upwards of £26,000!—a case, however, unique in Methodism, and arising from very peculiar circumstances.

cially entrusted to Mr. Hopper,—then a supernumerary, resident in the Orphan-House. His authority thus to act is found in the following playful yet earnest letter, dated “London, January 9th, 1768 :”—

“I CONSTITUTE *you*, Christopher Hopper by name, lord-president of the north. Enter upon your province—Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Durham, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire—without delay. Pray, despatch letters to Jacob Rowell, John Heslop, Richard Boardman, and your other deputies, without loss of time; and quicken them to put forth all their strength, and make one push for all. But hold! John Fenwick writes to me, ‘I will give £25.’ Do not abate him the five! No drawing back! I think the time is come for rolling away this reproach from us.

“Your thought concerning the preachers is a noble one. If fifty of them set such an example, giving a little out of their little, such an instance would have an effect upon many. Let one stir up another. Spare no pains. Write east, west, north, and south. You have a ready mind, and a ready pen; and it cannot be used in a better cause.

“I am yours affectionately,
“J. WESLEY.”

From the moneys thus raised, Newcastle, in 1771, received £75. 1s. 3d. The chapels at Shields, at Monkwearmouth, and in the Dales, were also successively relieved, from the same source.

Mr. Wesley, on visiting the north, in 1768, takes down from the lips of Elizabeth Hobson, a pious young woman of Sunderland, what he truly designates “one of the strangest accounts” on record. Her statements, in reference to her frequent intercourse with the spirits of persons departed this life, are published at length in his

Journal* of that period. "The well-known character of the person," he observes, "excludes all suspicion of fraud; and the nature of the circumstances themselves excludes the possibility of a delusion." Those who are curious as to such matters will find, in the perusal of her narrative, much that is at once interesting and perplexing.

On the 7th of March, 1769, MR. WILLIAM SMITH, a distinguished, and highly-influential member of the Orphan-House Society, was united in marriage to Miss Vazeille, step-daughter of Mr. Wesley, by whom Mr. Smith was regarded with more than ordinary affection and esteem. Two daughters, Mary and Jane, were the issue of this marriage. The former, in 1790, became the wife of the late Rev. John Stamp, who for forty-four years was honourably and usefully associated with the Wesleyan ministry. Her career as a wife and mother was short-lived: yet, in these important relations, as well as in her association with the then despised "people called Methodists," the Christian character was by her pleasantly sustained. On the 11th of November, 1794, a few weeks after giving birth to her third daughter, Mary Smith, she was summoned into the presence of her Lord. "Her end," states one who witnessed her peaceful departure, "was indeed glorious. She was favoured with much of heaven here, before she was called to the full enjoyment of it above. Her faith was lively and vigorous; her love, fervent; and her hope, full of immortality. She was truly a bride adorned for the Bridegroom, and entered triumphantly with Him to the marriage, before the door was shut."

JANE VAZEILLE, the second daughter, was married to the late Christopher Sundius, Esq.,—for many years an eminent merchant in London, and one of the earliest members of the committee of the British and Foreign

* Wesley's Works, vol. iii., p. 324—335.

Bible Society. "In her youth she sought and found peace with God ; and, through the vicissitudes of a chequered life, she exemplified a uniform and consistent piety. Chastened by many afflictions, and sanctified by the grace and truth of God, she attained an eminent maturity of Christian holiness. During her last illness she was enabled to testify that 'perfect love casteth out fear.' She rested firmly on the atonement of the Son of God, and stayed her spirit on the immutable word of God, amid the sinkings of her natural strength and spirits. Towards the last she had a strong desire to see her glorified Redeemer ; and in this she appears to have been indulged, even before her departure. After having been rapt into an ecstasy of unspeakable joy for several minutes, during which her face shone with an angelic brightness, she said, in answer to a question, 'I have seen my Saviour !' She entered into rest on the 24th of October, 1849, in the seventy-ninth year of her age. Prayer having been made that she might have a painless departure, she remarked, 'None but Jesus can dismiss my spirit :—soon after which, she calmly fell asleep in Him.'* These ladies were constantly regarded by Mr. Wesley as his granddaughters, and are thus remembered in his "last will and testament :—" "I give the coins, and whatever else is found in the drawer of my bureau at London, to my dear granddaughters, Mary and Jane Smith."

WILLIAM SMITH was born at Corbridge, near Hexham, in the year 1736. When he was but a child, his father was removed by death. The mother was a pious woman, a member of the Established Church ; and, under her judicious care, the son was trained "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." When fourteen years of age, he received the rite of confirmation from the hands of Bishop Butler. Entering into the true design of that

* Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, 1850, p. 94.

service, he spent the greater part of the previous night in prayer, and in the solemn consecration of his youthful heart to God. On the day following, when the prelate, with his hand on the head of the youth, was repeating the prescribed form,—“Defend, O Lord, this Thy servant with Thy heavenly grace, that he may continue Thine for ever, and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come to Thy everlasting kingdom,”—Smith became the subject of a special religious influence, and received what in after life he ever regarded as a manifestation of God’s forgiving love; being from that time saved from the power of outward sin. After receiving a good education from the then resident clergyman, he was placed in business with a near relative in Newcastle. Here he was induced to attend the services held at the Orphan-House, and became a member of its Society. When little more than twenty years of age, he was appointed by Mr. Wesley to the charge of a class, and also a leader of the bands; an office now discontinued. The mode of his appointment was somewhat arbitrary and unusual. At the close of a sermon delivered at the Orphan-House, Mr. Wesley, without any previous intimation given to the party, announced that on such a day, and at such an hour, a class would be formed by Mr. Smith, whom he then declared to be one of the leaders of the Orphan-House Society. At the time when the announcement was made, Mr. Smith was attired as one of the fashionable young men of the day; having on a waistcoat richly embroidered, and frills* adorning his wrists; nor were the customary

* Such frills, or “ruffles,” were at that period so far deprecated as a mark of worldliness, as to become the subject of grave prohibition. In one of the earliest Conferences the question was asked,—“Should we insist everywhere on the band-rules? particularly that relating to ruffles?” To which, the answer is given,—“By all means. This is no time to give any encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore, give no band-tickets to any in England, or Ireland, till they have left them off.”

silver buckles wanting. The thought at once occurred to him, as he cast his eye upon himself,—“ How inconsistent is all this with the office to which I am now appointed ! ” He felt ashamed ; and on the following day assumed another style of dress, in which plainness and almost elegant simplicity were combined. From this, in after life, he never deviated.

The character drawn of Nathanael is, to a great extent, descriptive of Mr. Smith : “ Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” He was a man of remarkably placid temper; a lover of peace, and not unfrequently acting as a “ peace-maker;” yet, in matters where principle or truth was involved, he displayed a firmness bordering upon obstinacy. As a preacher, he was much esteemed. His style in the pulpit was affectionate and winning; the effect of which was heightened by a pleasing voice, and a good delivery. He was a sound expositor of Divine truth; dwelling chiefly on the leading doctrines of the Gospel. Many under his faithful exhortations were brought to “ a knowledge of the truth,” and added to the church.

He generally accompanied Mr. Wesley, when preaching in the immediate vicinity ; occasionally riding with him on horseback as far as Edinburgh. On one occasion, by his presence of mind and noble daring, he rescued Mr. Wesley, and the members of his own family, from almost inevitable destruction. Mr. Wesley was proceeding toward Horsley, having with him in the chaise Mrs. Smith and her two little girls; Mr. Smith and Mr. Hopper accompanying them on horseback. “ About two miles from the town, just on the brow of the hill,”* narrates Mr. Wesley, “ on a sudden both the horses set out without any visible cause, and flew down the hill like an arrow out of a bow. In a minute, John fell off the coach-box. The horses then

* Benwell Bank-top ; on the road from Newcastle to Walbottle.

went on full speed, sometimes to the edge of the ditch on the right, sometimes on the left. A cart came up against them. They avoided it as exactly as if the man had been upon the box. A narrow bridge was at the foot of the hill. They went directly over the middle of it. They ran up the next hill with the same speed; many persons meeting them, but getting out of the way. Near the top of the hill was a gate, which led into a farmer's yard. It stood open. They turned short, and ran through it, without touching the gate on one side, or the post on the other. I thought, 'However, the gate which is on the other side of the yard, and is shut, will stop them:' but they rushed through it, as if it had been a cobweb, and galloped on through the corn-field. The little girls cried out, 'Grandpapa, save us!' I told them, 'Nothing will hurt you: do not be afraid:' feeling no more fear or care, (blessed be God!) than if I had been sitting in my study. The horses ran on till they came to the edge of a steep precipice! Just then, Mr. Smith, who could not overtake us before, galloped in between. They stopped in a moment. Had they gone on ever so little, he and we must have gone down together.

"I am persuaded both evil and good angels had a large share in this transaction. How large, we do not know now; but we shall know hereafter.

"I think, some of the most remarkable circumstances were, 1. Both the horses, which were tame and quiet as could be, starting out in a moment just at the top of the hill, and running down full speed. 2. The coachman's being thrown on his head with such violence, and yet not hurt at all. 3. The chaise running again and again to the edge of each ditch, and yet not into it. 4. The avoiding the cart. 5. The keeping just the middle of the bridge. 6. The turning short through the first gate in a manner that no coachman in England could have turned them when in full gallop. 7. The going through the second gate,

as if it had been but smoke, without slackening their pace at all. This would have been impossible, had not the end of the chariot-pole struck exactly on the centre of the gate; whence the whole by the sudden impetuous shock was broke into small pieces. 8. That the little girl, who used to have fits, on my saying, 'Nothing will hurt you,' ceased crying, and was quite composed. Lastly, that Mr. Smith struck in just then. In a minute more we had been down the precipice: and had not the horses then stopped at once, they must have carried him and us down together. 'Let those give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed, and delivered from the hand of the enemy.''"*

Mr. Smith was in the habit of riding a high-mettled horse, which in this instance proved of great service. Seeing the carriage flying in a straight line towards the precipice, he rushed forward in an angular direction, over-leaping hedge and ditch; and, risking his own life, darted in at the opportune moment between the horses of Wesley and the chasm just before them. How much appears to have been pendent on the daring step thus taken! Not merely the rescue of the founder of the United Societies, and of those in company with him, but, it may be, the continued existence and extension of Methodism itself.

The church-position of Mr. Smith was altogether unique. Having secured, by his success as a merchant, ample means of livelihood, he retired from business-pursuits nearly thirty years before his decease; cheerfully devoting his time and energies in promoting the spiritual interests of his fellow-men. He had frequently been urged by Mr. Wesley to devote himself fully to the work of an evangelist; but, hesitating to do so, he was recognised as a *quasi*-“helper.” To the Orphan-House pulpit he was appointed in regular rotation with the Circuit-ministers; he assisted in the quarterly visitation of the classes; attended several

* See Wesley's Works, vol. iv., pp. 19—21.

of the Conferences during the lifetime of Wesley; and, after his decease, performed the whole duty (change of residence excepted) of a Methodist itinerant preacher; even administering, as occasion required, the sacraments of baptism and the supper of our Lord.

After the removal of its founder, Methodism, as to its ecclesiastical standing and arrangements, may be regarded as having been for several years in a state of painful transition. Church-reformers and constitution-makers were rife. In the suggestion of measures deemed requisite in order to the preservation of the cause in its integrity, and in the efficient working of its system, Mr. Smith, with others, took an active part; and, in the attempt to remedy acknowledged defects, he was for awhile led to advocate plans and projects almost revolutionary in their tendency. The "Plan of Pacification," and subsequent regulations, (A. D. 1795 and 1797,) met to a great extent the views of moderate and right-minded men. In this Plan Mr. Smith acquiesced; and to his dying day he remained an attached and devoted member of "the old Body."

Some years before his removal to a happier world, the infirmities of age compelled him to relinquish all those official duties in which, for upwards of half a century, he had taken great delight. Yet, "in age and feebleness extreme," he uniformly "exhibited in his general experience, and especially in his patience under suffering, the powerful efficacy of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. The last time he attended the house of God was when he was carried thither to hear the funeral sermon of his dear and early friend, the Rev. Joseph Benson; with whom he had been in habits of friendship, perhaps as close as those which had subsisted between David and Jonathan." On the 30th of May, 1824, in the eighty-ninth year of his age, he peacefully fell asleep in Jesus.

In the "Tyne Mercury," of that period, the following testimony was borne to his worth:—"An ample compe-

tency, realised in early life, had enabled this venerable man, agreeably to his own benevolent wish, to devote his intelligent mind and activities, with his entire leisure, to the temporal and spiritual good of his fellow-creatures; and, during the greater part of half a century, his life had been one prolonged act of beneficence; in visiting the sick, in instructing the ignorant, and relieving the distressed, and in every practical form promoting by his example and influence the happiness and well-being of all around him. A protracted confinement, with occasional severe illness for four years, had been sustained with dignified patience and resignation, and with calm, unmoved confidence in redeeming love and mercy; and his last end was full of peace, and of the hope of the Gospel."

CHAPTER VI.

1770—1791.

Mr. Wesley at Morpeth—Thomas Rutherford—Renewal of Orphan-House Deed—Wesley on attendance at class—Case of Quietism—Smuggling rife at Sunderland and Shields—Wesley's "Word to a Smuggler"—Singular case of John Reed—Illustration of Luke xvi. 31—Re-arrangement of the Orphan-House classes—Sunderland the head of a Circuit—Foundation-stone of Alnwick chapel laid—A preaching-house without windows—Large congregations in Newcastle, and its vicinity—Margaret Barlow and her angel—Abstract of quarter-day accounts, April, 1788—Wesley's letter to William Percival—Chapel at North-Shields alienated from Methodism—Second chapel at Shields claimed by the Earl of Carlisle—Alnwick the head of a Circuit—Sacramental disputes revived—Brian Bury Collins—Orphan-House Sunday-school established—Letter from Wesley to Charles Atmore—School at Byker—Wesley's last northern tour—Sermon to Sunday-school children—New form of settling preaching-houses—Orphan-House premises let on lease to William Smith and others—Alteration in Orphan-House gallery—Erection of pews—Death of Wesley—Funeral sermon by Mr. Atmore.

AFTER an extensive tour in North Britain, during the spring of 1770, Mr. Wesley, on his way to Newcastle, preaches at Morpeth. One of his hearers on this occasion was Thomas Rutherford, a young man then resident in the Dales, but subsequently for four-and-thirty years an acceptable and successful itinerant preacher. The impression then produced is thus narrated by himself:—"In the month of May, this year, I for the first time saw and heard that extraordinary man, the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, at Morpeth. He was in the pulpit when I went into the chapel. His appearance struck me exceedingly. He appeared like one come down from heaven, to teach men the way thither. His text was,—'This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,

saith the Lord ; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.' (Hebrews viii. 10—12.) He opened the words in a concise and easy manner, and spoke from them with such perspicuity and simplicity, and at the same time with such wisdom and authority, as I never heard before. To me he seemed like one of the apostles, going about confirming the churches. From that part of the text, ' For all shall know Me from the least to the greatest,' he said, ' We are ready to suppose it should have been, from the greatest to the least : ' but, after assigning several reasons why it ought not to be so, he showed in particular, that that was not God's way ; that religion had always begun at the least ; that it began there in the days of our Lord and His apostles, and spread, and ascended with such rapidity, that St. Paul tells us that in his day there were ' saints in Cæsar's household.' The same, he observed, was the case in the present great revival of religion in our own land. It began among the ' least ; ' but ' God,' said he, ' hath so mightily prospered His word, that now we can say there are saints in Cæsar's household.' I, and the friends who accompanied me, returned highly satisfied, and thankful to the Lord, who had given us to see and hear such a venerable and eminent minister of Christ."

The year following, but in a manner that would now be deemed altogether irregular, this worthy man enters upon the duties of the Methodist itinerancy. One of the preachers appointed to the Newcastle Circuit having failed to fulfil his engagement, Mr. Rutherford was

desired to take his place. "For that end," says he, "Mr. Jaco, the then assistant, requested me to attend the Quarterly Meeting at Newcastle, on New-Year's day. Accordingly, I did attend, accompanied by my kind and faithful friend, Mr. William Robson, of Newham. When we got to the Orphan-House, Mr. Cownley was preaching from—'To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' (Heb. iv. 7.) After they had finished the temporal business of the meeting, the preachers desired to speak with me. There were present, Mr. Jaco, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Cownley, Mr. Smith, and some others. They told me, that there seemed a providential call for my engaging in the work of a travelling preacher; at least, for my making a trial, whether I was called to the work in that respect or not. I mentioned some of my fears and objections, which they soon answered. I remember, Mr. Cownley, looking seriously at me, repeated these words: 'Let the dead bury their dead; follow thou Me!' It was agreed that I should make a trial. Thus, on the 1st of January, 1772, I engaged to become an itinerant preacher, and entered on the important work ten days after."

During this year, the first renewal of the Orphan-House Deed takes place. Three of the original number—Henry Jackson, William Mackford, and Henry Thornton—had been removed by death. The remaining trustees,—John Nelson, Thomas Richards, Jonathan Reeves, and John Haughton,—being from distant residence unable to act, transfer the trust by Deed of Indenture to the under-mentioned persons:—Joseph Cownley; Christopher Hopper; William Smith, merchant; John Fenwick, merchant; John Stokoe, gentleman; Edward Avison, organist,—all of Newcastle; and John Greene, of Gateshead, merchant. The Deed, a verbatim copy of the original one, was not enrolled; nor, indeed, was this at all necessary. Yet, in after years, misapprehension on

this point gave rise to much contention and uneasiness. The Deed bears date, August 4th, 1772.

At the Conference of 1775, Mr. Benson, having previously laboured one year in the Newcastle Circuit, is again appointed to that important station; having as his superintendent Mr. William Thompson, who, after the death of Wesley, became the first President of the Methodist Conference; while Robert Empringham and Joseph Moore were associated with them as colleagues.

The following letter, addressed by the founder of Methodism to Mr. Benson, is in evidence that what in the present day is often mourned over as a mark of spiritual declension was then the subject of special complaint:—

“Near London, February 22d, 1776.

“DEAR JOSEPH,

“We must threaten no longer, but perform. In November last I told the London Society, ‘Our rule is, to meet a class once a week; not once in two, or three. I now give you warning: I will give tickets to none in February, but those that have done this.’ I have stood to my word. Go you, and do likewise, wherever you visit the classes. Begin, if need be, at Newcastle; and go on at Sunderland. Promises to meet are now out of date. Those that have not met seven times in the quarter, exclude. Read their names in the Society; and inform them all, you will, the next quarter, exclude all that have not met twelve times: that is, unless they were hindered by distance, sickness, or by some unavoidable business.

“And, I pray, without fear or favour remove the leaders, whether of classes or bands, who do not watch over souls ‘as those that must give account.’

“I am, dear Joseph,

“Yours affectionately,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

The directions given above show clearly the great importance which Mr. Wesley attached to stated seasons for Christian fellowship and mutual prayer. His successors in the ministry have ever sympathized with their founder on this important point. Thus, in the Address of the Conference to the Societies, bearing date "Newcastle-upon-Tyne, August 10th, 1861," the following admonitory testimony is borne:—

.... "In the wonderful Providence of God, we have been so constituted, as it respects our church-organization, that every degree of spiritual declension among us is indicated by the neglect of some of our established means of grace. The attendance at class-meetings, lovefeasts, and prayer-meetings, may with us be taken as the test of a rising or falling church. These means of grace were necessary to the early Methodists, as the appropriate vehicles for the manifestation and communication of that Divine life, the outflowing of which could not be pent up within the restricted forms and ordinances of then-existing churches. Our forefathers practically seceded from the Established Church, mainly on this ground. How, then, do we stand under the application of the same test? If, in any Societies, the tone of spiritual religion becomes generally impaired, the effects may be expected to become visible at these points."

In June, 1766, Mr. Wesley finds the numbers in immediate connexion with the Orphan-House Society to be about four hundred; and those at Sunderland, three hundred and seventy-two. At Newcastle he talks with a pious woman, whose case somewhat perplexes him. "I could not doubt," says he, "of her being quite sincere, nay, much devoted to God. But she had fallen among some well-meaning enthusiasts, who taught her so to attend the inward voice as to quit the Society, the preaching, the Lord's supper, and almost all outward means. I find no

persons harder to deal with than these. One knows not how to advise them. They must not act contrary to their conscience, though it be an erroneous one. And who can convince them that it is erroneous? None but the Almighty."

Notwithstanding the strenuous efforts put forth by Mr. Wesley some years before, to repress the evil of smuggling, then prevalent in Sunderland and its vicinity, the practice had unhappily revived, and was at this period rife. Hence the following stringent directions given to Mr. Benson, and those associated with him:—

“ “ You have now a providential call to stand in the gap between the living and the dead. Fear nothing. Begin in the name of God, and go through with the work. If only six will promise you to sin no more, leave only six in the Society. But, my belief is, a hundred and fifty are now clear of blame; and, if you are steady, a hundred more will amend. You must, at all events, tear up this evil by the roots. The ‘Word to a Smuggler’ should be read and dispersed. And secure your fellow-labourers, that you may all speak one thing. Go on; for God is with you.” “ Not only the assistant, but every preacher, is concerned to see all our rules observed. I desire Brother Rhodes* will give no tickets either to those who have not constantly met their classes, or to any that do not solemnly promise to deal in stolen goods no more. He and you together may put a stop to this crying sin.” “ The matter is short. I require you to meet the Societies at Sunderland and Shields next quarter, and to give no tickets to any person who will not promise neither to buy nor sell uncustomed goods any more. I am sorry — did not save you the trouble. I thought he had been another man.”

* The assistant who succeeded Mr. Thompson.

The "Word to a Smuggler"—the tract above referred to—is, perhaps, the most stringent and conclusive protest ever penned on the subject of this plausible evil. Smuggling, in its general aspect, is there denounced as an express violation of the Saviour's injunction, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's;" and, also, as being in itself a general robbery: seeing "the more the king's duties are diminished, the more the taxes must be increased." "Open smuggling" is characterized as "robbing on the highway;" and private smuggling as just "the same with picking of pockets." The usual excuses for it are quoted one by one, and forcibly refuted; and, in conclusion, the writer strongly urges: "Let your eye be fixed on the word of God, not on the examples of men. . . . In spite of all the persuasions, all the reasonings of men, keep to the word of God. If all on the right hand, and on the left, will be knaves, be you an honest man."

The following letter is given in full, not only as a specimen of Mr. Wesley's repeated denunciation of this evil, but as referring to a case of sore temptation, if not of diabolical possession, such as is rarely met with:—

"Near London, December 24th, 1776.

"DEAR JOSEPH,

"THE total suppression of that vile practice will, doubtless, be a difficult task. But it is worth all the labour; yea, though you should be obliged to cut off some of our oldest members. For you must absolutely go through with your work. Leave neither root nor branch; else the reformation will be but for a season, and then the evil will sprout up again.

"The case of John Reed is one of the most remarkable which has fallen under my notice. From the beginning, it was my judgment that the disorder was more than natural. I wish he would take opportunities of writing

down as many particulars as he can recollect, and send me as circumstantial an account as he can. You may much assist him herein.

“I am, dear Joseph,

“Yours affectionately,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

In a communication addressed by Mr. Benson to Mr. Rutherford, this singular case is described at large. The letter bears date “Newcastle, January 31st, 1777.”

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“FOR this six months past, I have had an intention of writing to you, but from various causes have deferred it from time to time until now. But now I must write a few lines, both to inquire how you go on, and also to signify my affectionate remembrance of you, and my desire after your prosperity. And, because I believe it may be of use to you, and to others to whom you may mention it, I will take this opportunity of informing you of as remarkable a case as ever came under my notice.

“I know not whether you are acquainted with John Reed, one of our leaders and local preachers here. If you were, perhaps you have heard of the distress he has been in for months past. About the beginning of March last, he was very poorly in body, and likely to fall into a decline: hence, he could not attend his business as formerly; and, being a little embarrassed in his circumstances, he was obliged to call his creditors together, and deliver up everything into their hands; though I believe he was nearly able to pay twenty shillings to the pound. At this time it pleased God to bring his sins and his backslidings to his remembrance; and that, in such a manner, that, like a flood, they bore down all his confidence and hope, and he sunk into the horrible pit of black despair. For nine months he had not any the most distant gleam of hope, but utterly and constantly rejected

all the encouragement we endeavoured to administer to him from the invitations and promises of the Gospel ; still believing, and still affirming, that there was no mercy for such a wretch as he was. During this time, he was haunted night and day, without intermission, with the most horrid temptations of putting an end to his life ; which he attempted to do so often, and in so many different ways, that the Providence of God—His ever watchful Providence — appears most wonderful in his preservation. What gave edge to these temptations, and laid him peculiarly open to them, was the intolerable anguish and torment he was continually in ; anguish and torment so dreadful and shocking, that it is still his opinion [that] damned spirits cannot suffer more, till the day of judgment, than he has suffered for these nine months.

“ As his friends thought him lunatic, and observed him perpetually inclined to make away with himself, he was watched night and day ; and at last, about June, was put into the Lunatic Hospital. Here various means were used for his recovery, but to no purpose ; he still affirming that all his friends mistook his case, and that no medicines could do him good ; because (he said) his disorder lay, not in his body, but his mind. In the meantime, prayer was made for him among the people, without ceasing, in public and in private ; especially at all the more solemn meetings, such as watchnights and lovefeasts. And although the Lord seemed to tarry long, yet, at last, He did hear and answer ; and made it plain beyond dispute that He did. For, that He might have all the glory of this work to Himself, His Providence so ordered it that he was not set at liberty in the Hospital, lest his restoration should be ascribed to the power of medicine ; but he made his escape thence, about three weeks before Christmas, with a fixed resolution to put an end to a wretched life, no longer supportable.

"He was now quite given up for lost, by all his friends; as he himself, as soon as he left the Hospital, gave up himself for lost, and bid a final farewell (as he said) to us all; expecting in a few hours to be in that place from which there is no redemption. He wandered about for some days, melancholy and despairing; crying for mercy, but expecting none; and going from place to place, seeking for means to end his life; but, when it came to the point, always marvellously deprived of the power to do it. At last he was brought to resolve, he would attempt it no more, but would bear the indignation of the Lord because he had sinned against Him; and with this resolution he went home. His wife and children wept for joy to see him return; and, indeed, so did many more. Through the persuasion of his wife, he came to the Room morning and night; and within a week, I believe, was first revived with a blessed gleam of hope, and at last was perfectly set at liberty.

"And now, being brought out of the very belly of hell into the confines of heaven, you may suppose he will rejoice with 'joy unspeakable, and full of glory.' He is truly and constantly happy; and the joy of his soul spreads a serenity and glory over his very countenance; which is rather striking to those who observed him before he was set at liberty. He is kept in continual peace, and hope, and love; and his conversation and behaviour are remarkably edifying. At our last lovefeast, on Christmas-day, he gave us a very full and distinct account of the whole affair; and that in a manner so affecting, that I believe there was hardly a dry cheek in the whole assembly. The generality were quite broken down under a sense of the Divine goodness to him, (for he was very dear to them all,) in working out for him so wonderful a deliverance; and that, in answer to their prayers. Such a melting season I never saw before. The people remembered how he had been solemnly and particularly prayed

for during his distress, and were now overjoyed to see that the Lord had heard and delivered him. He imputes the whole of what he has suffered to his backslidings in heart from the Lord, (for his life was still unblamable,)—for which, he says, he was given up into the hands of Satan for a season; to be buffeted for his own sake, and for a warning to others.

“That we may all take warning, and keep close to God, is the prayer of

“Your sincere friend,

“JOSEPH BENSON.”

The “buffeting of Satan,” to which this worthy man was so fearfully exposed, was doubtless permitted for his own spiritual profit, as well as for the edification and warning of others. “I am inclined to think,” writes Mr. Benson in another communication, “that we all partly mistook his case. Sore vexed of the enemy he certainly has been; but I query if he was at all out of his senses, from first to last. I trust this most remarkable dispensation of Divine Providence has already proved in some degree, and will prove more and more, a general blessing to the Society in this town. I hope many of us will have grace to consider it as a solemn warning not to trifle with God, inasmuch as we have seen by this instance ‘what a fearful thing it is to fall into His hands.’ And, on the other hand, others, I trust, will be encouraged, though they ‘walk in darkness,’ (in distress and affliction,) ‘and have no light,’ still to ‘trust in the Lord,’ and cry to Him who ‘will not always chide, nor keep His anger for ever.’”

From a record in the MS. Journal of the late Rev. Charles Atmore, we find, that, some years after, poor Reed was again the subject of extreme mental depression. On Mr. Wesley’s last visit but one to Newcastle, in May, 1790, “he was highly honoured,” Mr. Atmore states,

"in his ministry; particularly to one who had been in a state of great despair for some years. As soon as he arrived at the Orphan-House, Mr. Wesley inquired after this individual, and I accompanied him in visiting him. As soon as he entered the room where the poor man was, he went up to him, and, as a messenger from God, said, 'Brother Reed, I have a word from God unto thee: Jesus Christ maketh thee whole!' He then knelt down to pray; and such a season I have seldom experienced. Hope instantly sprang up, and despair gave place; and, although he had not been out of his habitation, nor even from his wretched bed, for several years, he went that evening to hear Mr. Wesley preach; while God graciously confirmed the testimony of His servant, in restoring to him the 'light of His countenance.'"

For ten or twelve subsequent years, with one exception, Mr. Wesley pays only a biennial visit to the north. In 1781, when spending several days in and about Newcastle, he preaches on Sunday, the 17th of June, at the Ballast-Hills in the morning, in the afternoon at Gateshead, and in the evening at the Garth-Heads, in the immediate vicinity of the Keelmen's Hospital; the managers of which, for some unexplained reason, had prohibited the further occupation of "the Square" for preaching. Yet, notwithstanding these engagements, he attends Divine service at All-Saints' church, where a remark is made, which, he states, he had never read or heard before, "in confirmation of that assertion of Abraham, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.' 'The thing,' observed the minister, 'has been tried. One did rise from the dead, in the sight of a multitude of people. The namesake of this Lazarus rose from the dead. The very Pharisees could not deny it. Yet who, of them that believed not Moses and the prophets, was thereby persuaded to repent?'"

The year following, Mr. Wesley, after being engaged for several days in examining the Orphan-House Society, reports that he found them "increased in grace, though not in number." "I think," says he, "four in five, at least, were alive to God." The congregations also are spoken of as larger, morning and evening, than they had been for twenty years preceding. To secure a yet greater attention to the means of Christian fellowship, Mr. Wesley divides "all the classes anew, according to their places of abode;"—an arrangement greatly to be desired, as to many Societies, in this day, so far as circumstances permit.

At the Conference held in London, in 1782, Sunderland is formed, with places adjacent, into a separate Circuit; having, as its first ministerial appointment, Duncan Wright and Thomas Dixon. The number in Society, at the close of the year, is reported as exactly one thousand.

On Friday, June 3d, 1786, Mr. Wesley lays the first stone of the "preaching-house" at Alnwick. A large concourse of persons is gathered together; with whom some time was spent on the spot, "in solemn prayer, and singing praise to God." The chapel is yet standing, without enlargement; and, certainly, as to its architectural character, it is of very humble pretensions. Mr. Wesley, it would seem, was far from satisfied with its construction. "I was a little surprised," writes he, when visiting the spot, two years after, "at the new preaching-house, (in which I preached in the evening,) exactly resembling the meeting-house which we hire at Brentford. Had they no eyes? Or had they never seen any English house? But the scare-crow must now stand without remedy." This severe critique was to some extent justified by the barn-like* character of the erection. The

* The "House" at Alnwick was, however, far in advance of the chapel built at Dumfries, under the direction of Robert Dall, then the assistant there. "At five," May 14th, 1788, writes Mr. Wesley, "I was importuned to preach in the preaching-house; but such a one I

galleries were disproportionately high ; whilst the diminutive windows, almost reaching the ceiling, gave an aspect of dreariness to the whole.

The day following, Sunday, May 25th, 1788, Mr. Wesley preaches in this "scare-crow" house "at nine, and two, and half-past five, with much enlargement of spirit." On the 26th, he preaches there again at five in the morning ; and, taking a solemn leave of the congregation, journeys toward Newcastle; preaching at Morpeth on his way. "In the evening," writes he, "I preached at Newcastle, to such a congregation as was never there before, except on a Sunday ; and, indeed, all the congregations, morning and evening, were such as had not been before, since the House was built. Surely, this is the accepted time for Newcastle. Perhaps I may never see it more!" This sentiment was, doubtless, shared by the multitudes who thronged the chapels, wherever he was announced to preach ; whilst a more than ordinarily gracious influence accompanied his word. Thus, in reference to his preaching on Saturday, June 7th, to "a lovely congregation" at Burnup-field, on "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous," he states, "I have found nothing like it since I left London ; such was

'The o'erwhelming power of grace divine.'

I know not that I ever felt such self-abasement before ; and the whole congregation seemed equally moved. And so they were at Newcastle in the evening, while I explained, and strongly applied, 'I am the all-sufficient God : walk before Me, and be thou perfect.'" Again, when preaching his last sermon, during this visit, to an immense multitude at the Garth-Heads, (on the text,

never saw before. It had no windows at all: so that, although the sun shone bright, we could see nothing without candles. But, I believe, our Lord shone on many hearts, while I was applying those words, 'I will : be thou clean.'

"We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain," 2 Cor. vi. 1,) "The people," says he, "appeared to devour the word ; and I did not spare them. I was then ready to say, 'Now I am clear from the blood of these men !' No, I dare not : I judge not my own self. He that judgeth me is the Lord."

Before his leaving Newcastle, a singular account is put into Mr. Wesley's hands, of a young woman lately resident at Darlington. "I told the person who brought it," writes he, "I can form no judgment till I talk with Margaret Barlow herself." A few days after, the opportunity is given, when a lengthened interview takes place at Darlington. "I asked her," says he, "abundance of questions ; and was soon convinced, she was not only sincere, but deep in grace, and therefore incapable of deceit. I was convinced, likewise, that she had frequent intercourse with a spirit, that appeared to her in the form of an angel. I know not how to judge of the rest. Her account was, 'For above a year, I have seen this angel, whose face is exceeding beautiful ; her raiment' (so she speaks) 'white as snow, and glistering like silver ; her voice unspeakably soft and musical. She tells me many things before they come to pass. She foretold, I should be ill at such a time, in such a manner, and well at such an hour ; and it was so exactly. She has said, such a person shall die at such a time ; and he did so. Above two months ago, she told me your brother was dead, (I did not know you had a brother,) and that he was in heaven. And, some time since, she told me, you will die in less than a year. But what she has most earnestly and frequently told me is, that God will in a short time be avenged of obstinate sinners, and will destroy them with fire from heaven.' Whether this will be so or no," continues Mr. Wesley, "I cannot tell : but, when we were alone, there was a wonderful power in her

words ; and, as the Indian said to David Brainerd, ‘ they did good to my heart.’

“ It is above a year since this girl was first visited in this manner ; being then between thirteen and fourteen years old. But she was then quite a womanish girl, and of unblamable behaviour. Suppose, that which appeared to her was really an angel ; yet, from the face, the voice, and the apparel, she might easily mistake him for a female ; and this mistake is of little consequence. Much good has already resulted from this odd event, and is likely to ensue ; provided, those who believe and those who disbelieve her report have but patience with each other.” *

On this singular case Mr. Wesley expresses no opinion, beyond stating his conviction of the sincerity and piety of the young woman. The prescience of her angel was certainly at fault, as to the predicted time of Mr. Wesley’s death : so that, whether the case was simply one of mental hallucination, or whether some supernatural influence must be brought in to explain it, has yet to be decided.

The financial state of the Newcastle Circuit is given in the following Abstract of the Circuit-accounts for the quarter ending April 1st, 1788 :—

On the *Dr.* side, under the head of “ Cash received,” we find,

Received arrears of last quarter’s collection :—	<i>£. s. d.</i>
Rothbury, 3s. 6d. ; Saugh-House, 19s. ; Whit-	
tington, 6s. ; Hallington, £1. 1s. ; Benton-	
square, 8s. 6d.	2 18 0
” Twelve weeks’ class-collection.....	19 13 3
” Interest of £100 legacy	2 10 0
” A quarter’s collection, gallery-seats	3 2 2
” Legacy left by Mr. Errington, paid by his executors, Messrs. Smith and Stokoe	20 0 0

* See Wesley’s Works, vol. iv., pp. 423, 424.

	£. s. d.
Received quarter-day collection, as follows :—	
" Newcastle	8 15 10
" Chowden-Fell	1 0 10
" South-Shields	1 1 0
" North-Shields	1 11 6
" Howden-Pans	0 12 7
" St. Anthony	1 1 0
" Benton-square	0 13 0
" Hartley	0 10 0
" Plessey	0 10 6
" Morpeth	1 1 0
" Meldon	0 3 0
" Earsdon-Hill	0 3 0
" Alnwick, and places adjacent ...	2 10 0
	19 13 3
Balance due to Stewards	22 17 4
	£90 14 0

On the *Cr.* side, under the head of "Cash paid," the following entries occur :—

	£. s. d.
Cash in advance, by Steward, January 1st, 1788	39 7 11
Paid to Dr. Coke on account of expenses, going to	
Scotland	1 1 0
" Thirteen weeks' board and house-expenses	15 10 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
" Several small articles of house-furniture	2 10 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
" Mr. Brumwell, repairing house-furniture	0 14 6
" Carriage of Mr. Wride's boxes	0 7 6
" Stable-accounts	0 15 8
" Pew-rent of two seats in St. Andrew's church... .	0 2 6
" On quarter-day, as follows :—	
Mr. Wood and wife, and three	
children	9 17 0
Mr. Thom, and two children	5 17 0
Mr. Wride	3 17 0
Mr. Cownley	2 2 0
Letter-bill	0 17 2
Coal-bill	2 18 6
Candle-bill	4 16 0
	30 4 8
	£90 14 0

The income and expenditure of the Circuit, as given above, clearly indicate, as to its financial position, a “day of small and feeble things.” No house-rent is named: the preachers and their families lived, at this period, in the higher story of the Orphan-House, above the chapel and class-rooms; in Scotch-flat fashion. The charge for coals and candles is explained by the fact, that the chapel receipts and expenditure of the Orphan-House are (in part, at least) included in those of the Circuit. The payment for “seats” in St. Andrew’s church may in our day appear singular; but, at that period, the families of the preachers were expected to attend regularly the services of the parish-church. On this, in Newcastle, great stress was laid. It was, indeed, the strong recommendation and requirement of Mr. Wesley himself; in perfect keeping with which is the following letter, addressed by him to Mr. William Percival, when stationed in Newcastle:—

“ DEAR BILLY,

“ You cannot be too watchful against evil-speaking, or too zealous for the poor Church of England. I command Sister Percival for having her child baptized there, and for returning public thanks. By all means go to church as often as you can, and exhort all Methodists so to do. They that are enemies to the Church are enemies to *me*. I am a friend to it, and ever was. By our reading prayers, we prevent our people contracting a hatred for forms of prayer; which would naturally be the case if we prayed extempore.

“ I am, with love to Sister Percival,

“ Dear Billy,

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ JOHN WESLEY.

“ London, Feb. 17th, 1787.”

Toward the close of the year 1788, a painful dispute

arose, as to the settlement of the chapel recently erected in Milburn-place, North-Shields; the trustees of which strove to retain in their own hands the power of rejecting or displacing any preachers of whom they disapproved. Against claims of this kind Mr. Wesley determinately set his face; not only because such demands, if admitted, would be subversive of the system of itinerancy, but because the result would be the establishment of a trustee-tyranny, destructive alike of the Scriptural independence of the preachers, and of the harmony of the Societies under their care. Hence the following letter, addressed to the preachers then stationed in the Newcastle Circuit:—

“ Dublin, April 11th, 1789.

“ I REQUIRE you three, Peter Mill, Joseph Thompson, and John Stamp, without consulting or regarding any person whatever, to require a positive answer of Edward Coats, within three weeks after the receipt of this,— ‘ Will you, or will you not, settle the house at Milburn-place, North-Shields, on the Methodist plan?’ If he will not do it within another week, I farther require, that none of you preach in that house, unless you will renounce all connection with

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ JOHN WESLEY.

“ I am at a point. I will be trifled with no longer.”

The trustees refusing to acquiesce in this reasonable requirement, the chapel at Milburn-place is abandoned by the preachers. Another place of worship, it seems, had been erected in North-Shields; but, due care not having been taken in the investigation of the title, the land and premises were subsequently claimed by the Earl of Carlisle. The point in dispute being referred to arbitration, the claims of his lordship were substantiated; so that the Methodists, much to their discouragement

and regret, lost that chapel also. "Mr. Reed's loss," writes Mr. Atmore, "will be about £1,100 ; and our loss cannot be estimated : for, by reason of this chapel being built, we lost the Milburn-place house, and now we have lost this also ; so that, had not Mr. Adamson offered us the old Methodist chapel, (which *he* now occupies,) I should have had no place at all." Mr. Atlay, too, who had recently accepted a call from some seceding trustees at Dewsbury,* induces several of "Mr. Wesley's people," both at Shields and Newcastle, to rally round his standard. The secession was, however, short-lived, and produced but little mischief.

At the Conference of 1789, Alnwick is permanently separated from Newcastle, and constituted the head of a Circuit ; having, as its ministerial staff, William Hunter, William Stephenson, and John Furness. The places associated with Alnwick were Earsdon, Plessey, Morpeth, Meldon, Saughouse, Rothbury, Chattin, Berwick, Lucker, North-Sunderland, Linkhall, Alnmouth, Warkworth, Lesbury, Dunstan, and Branton. In consequence of this arrangement, two ministers only are stationed at Newcastle ; namely, Charles Atmore and John Ogilvie.

Toward the close of the year, the disputes as to the administration of the Lord's supper, and service in Church-hours, are unhappily revived, and excite much painful and bitter feeling. "This contention," Mr. Atmore states, "was occasioned by a visit from the Rev. B. C—, who had been in Newcastle the preceding year, and produced considerable strife and mischief. The Society was divided in affection, and many unpleasant

* The Conference was held this year in Leeds. "We considered," Mr. Wesley states, "the case of the Dewsbury house, which the self-elected trustees have robbed us of. The point they contended for was this,—that they should have a right of rejecting any preachers they disapproved of. But this, we saw, would destroy itinerancy. So they chose J. A. (Atlay) for a preacher, and W. E. (Eels) as his curate."

effects followed. The spirit of party seemed to have subsided, and the people appeared united to promote the best things. But this second visit from that gentleman again raised the demon of discord; and the work of God, to the great grief of my soul, was seriously impeded."

The Rev. Brian Bury Collins, of the University of Cambridge, was the clergyman to whom Mr. Atmore refers. He was a personal friend of Mr. Wesley, and is spoken of by him, as having "much experience in the things of God." His pulpit-ministrations were generally acceptable and useful. He frequently assisted Mr. Wesley in the administration of the Lord's supper; and occasionally, at his request, pastorally visited several of the Societies. He appears on this occasion to have acted unadvisedly, as the advocate and spokesman of the High-Church party in Newcastle; who were prepared to run all hazards in opposing the just demands of their Methodist brethren. Hence the confusion and strife. The strong desire of the Newcastle Society, in reference to the administration of the Lord's supper, as a privilege to which, as a Society, they stood entitled, was evidenced in the attendance of upwards of four hundred of their number, when, during this visit, that sacrament was administered in the Orphan-House by Mr. Collins.

A singular circumstance is related of this clergyman, when previously visiting Newcastle. "After preaching at nine A.M. on the Lord's day, he accompanied a large portion of his hearers to All-Saints' church, and took a station contiguous to the vestry. Being very canonical in his appearance, he attracted the attention of the officiating clergyman, who politely requested him to preach. The invitation was at once accepted, and a messenger despatched to Mr. Smith's, in High-Friar-street, for his gown, cassock, &c. On entering the pulpit, instead of producing a written discourse for the profit of the congre-

gation, he took his text from a small Bible, which he had in his hand, and edified them with an extemporaneous and truly evangelical discourse. The greater part of the congregation was astonished, and the Methodist portion of it greatly pleased. The invitation was not repeated.”*

Early in the year 1790,—^{six} years after the establishment of the first institution of the kind, by Mr. Raikes, at Gloucester,—a Sunday-school was formed in connexion with the Orphan-House ; chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Atmore. “ Returning one evening from the neighbouring village of Byker, where he had been preaching, his mind was greatly pained on account of the number of children who were openly violating the Sabbath, by amusing themselves in various sports in the lanes and streets, as he passed along. The idea of a Sunday-school was forcibly impressed upon his mind, and he formed the resolution to endeavour, by such means as were within his reach, to accomplish his laudable design. On the following day he mentioned his views to several of the Wesleyan friends in Newcastle, who warmly approved of the undertaking, and tendered all the support in their power. During the same week, a meeting of the individuals who were favourable to the object was convened in the band-room of the Orphan-House ; when it was determined that a Sunday-school should be commenced in that building, with as little delay as possible.” Subscriptions and donations, amounting to £38. 15s., were quickly promised ; and on Sunday, February 28th, 1790, the school was opened in the Orphan-House, when nearly three hundred and fifty children were enrolled as scholars.†

* Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, 1845, p. 117.

† The following list of subscribers to this, the *first* Sabbath-school established in the north of England, will be read with interest, especially by their descendants in the present day :—

The progress of the undertaking is thus narrated in the MS. Journal of the late Rev. Charles Atmore :—

“ Sunday, March 7th.—I was busily engaged this day in the Sunday-school: our numbers amounted to about five hundred. Dr. Coke preached a charity-sermon for the school in the evening, from—‘ And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.’ (Ephes. vi. 4.) The collection on the occasion amounted to £12. 6s.

“ Sunday, March 14th.—Our number of scholars this day amounted to about seven hundred: we had very great order in the school.

“ Sunday, March 21st.—I attended the school; and now we have about eight hundred children. They are divided into thirty-two classes. I trust good will accrue.

“ Sunday, April 25th.—The Lord was very present in the Orphan-House this morning, whilst I preached, from Matth. vi. 13, upon the nature of temptation. After preaching, I read the service of the Church of England to the children of the Sunday-school, in order to obviate an objection that is made to it by some,—that we purpose making Methodists of all the children. We wish them all to fear God and work righteousness, and to use all necessary methods to obtain that end. May it be answered!

“ Wednesday, May 19th.—At eight o’clock this evening we had a general meeting of the committee, inspectors, and teachers of the Sunday-school. We spent about two

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
Mr. William Smith	2	2	0	Mr. Scott.....	0	10	6
„ Geo. Jefferson	2	2	0	„ Jon. Brumwell...	0	10	6
„ Fishwick	2	2	0	„ Jos. Walton	0	10	0
„ Wm. Calander	1	1	0	„ Robt. Spoors ...	0	5	0
„ John Cowley...	1	1	0	„ Jacob Atkinson	0	5	0
„ Wm. Darnell...	1	1	0	„ Hugh Taylor ...	0	2	0
„ Geo. Shadford	1	1	0	„ Wm. Wallace ...	0	1	0
„ Thos. Jamieson	1	1	0	„ Jas. Eesdon	0	1	0
	0 3						

hours in endeavouring to strengthen each other's hands in this good work ; and I was happy to find that the hearts of all the teachers seemed to be as much in it as ever. God has greatly blessed several of them in their own souls since they began ; and some of the children have evidenced that their labour has not been in vain."

Sunday-schools, as an influential agency in reaching the neglected children of the poor, had, from their first establishment, Mr. Wesley's cordial approval and support. In the year 1785, he published, in his "Arminian Magazine," the account given by Mr. Raikes of the first experiment of the kind made at Gloucester ; and subsequently he embraced every opportunity to urge on the attention of his people an example so laudable. No sooner did he hear of the steps taken at Newcastle, than he addressed Mr. Atmore as follows :—

" Dublin, March 24, 1790.

" DEAR CHARLES,

" I AM glad you have set up Sunday-schools in Newcastle. It is one of the noblest institutions which have been seen in Europe for some centuries ; and will increase more and more, provided the teachers and inspectors do their duties. What can prevent the increase of this blessed work, but the neglect of the instruments ? Therefore, be sure to watch over these with all care, that they may not grow weary in well-doing. I shall be at Darlington, if God permit, on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 4th and 5th ; on Thursday, at Durham, to preach at twelve o'clock at noon ; and at Newcastle, between four and five in the afternoon.

" Grace be with you and yours.

" I am, dear Charles,

" Your affectionate friend and brother,

" JOHN WESLEY."

Mr. John Nichol, one of the three remaining trustees

of what is now designated, under the authority of the Charity Commissioners, "The Orphan-House Charity," states, that previously to the formation of the Orphan-House school, a few children had received instruction weekly on the Sabbath at Byker, under the auspices of Mr. Johnson, a colliery-owner in the neighbourhood, and at that period a liberal supporter of the Methodist movement. For several years subsequent, no similar schools were met with in the north of England. With that at the Orphan-House Mr. Nichol was associated as early as the year 1802 ; when on the school-roll were found the names of upwards of twelve hundred children ; a thousand of whom were in regular attendance on the Sabbath, filling every available space which the Orphan-House, with its band and class rooms, yielded.

For upwards of twenty years, the Sabbath-school held in the Orphan-House was the only efficient institution of the kind in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Through its agency, a mighty moral influence was brought to bear upon the masses of society in the town and neighbourhood.* From

* The following recollections of the Rev. John Bolam pleasingly illustrate the great interest excited by the establishment of the Orphan-House school, and also the character of the instruction there given. "My earliest and happiest reminiscences," Mr. B. observes, "are associated with the old Orphan-House Sabbath-school. I was taken to it when only a little boy in petticoats, and when I could scarcely walk the distance from Pipewell-gate entry, Gateshead, to the school, but was generally carried part of the distance. To the truly godly instruction I there received from my teacher—a 'canny' Newcastle collier—I owe my conversion to God, my union with 'the people called Methodists,' and the success which has attended my ministry during a period of nearly forty years. At that day, *the conversion of the children to God was the all-absorbing object which the teachers had in view ; everything else being regarded as secondary.* . . . Never shall I forget the Sabbath morning when the teacher of my class said, 'Now, my canny lads, I am going to tell you what's the best thing in the world, and how you may get it.' His earnest and affectionate address went home to my heart ; and, although a very little boy, I left the school under the enlightening and awakening influences of God's Holy Spirit ; resolving

its ranks, scores of local preachers have been raised ; whilst among those who, after being teachers or scholars there, have entered the Wesleyan ministry, may be placed the names of Aaron Floyd, Thomas Hewitt, John Bolam, Robert Thompson, John E. Coulson, John Hobkirk, Thomas Brumwell, William Davison, George T. Morrison.

A printed programme of Mr. Wesley's last northern tour was transmitted to the preachers throughout the Connexion early in the spring of this year ; by which they were informed where letters might reach him during his absence from London. To this was appended the following laconic note :—

“ As many persons desire to know where I am from this time to the Conference, I have set down my route, which, if God permit, I shall keep till that time.—N.B. I have not yet finally settled the rest of my plan ; probably shall, if I come to York. Many persons are continually teasing me to visit more places. Now let them judge whether I have not enough.

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

By another hand, two postscripts are added :—

“ 1. Those persons who have occasion to write to Mr. Wesley are requested to direct their letters according to this plan, and not to London.

“ 2. Our friends here (in London) earnestly desire that Mr. Wesley may be remembered in prayer, especially at the next Quarterly Fast ; that his strength may be continued, and, if it please God, increased also.”

In pursuance of this plan, as well as in agreement with at once, in the days of my youth, to seek after ‘ the best thing in the world,’—true, inward, saving religion ; the life of God in the soul. . . . To the able and judicious training of the late Mr. Thomas Stanley and Mr. John Nichol, by whom in after years a number of young men were met for instruction in theology, on a week-day evening, in one of the Orphan-House class-rooms over the chapel, I also owe much.”

the intimation given in his letter of March 24th, Mr. Wesley is at Darlington on the 5th of May, where he is met by Mr. Atmore and Mr. William Smith, from Newcastle. "We heard him preach," writes Mr. Atmore, "in the evening, from—'And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.' (Coloss. i. 17.) He appears very feeble; and no wonder, he being nearly eighty-eight years of age. His sight has failed so much, that he cannot see to give out the hymn; yet his voice is strong, and his spirits remarkably lively. Surely, this great and good man is the prodigy of the age.*

"Thursday morning, May 6th.—About half-past three o'clock, we left Darlington, and reached Newcastle at ten A.M. Mr. Wesley preached in the evening, from—'The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.' (Isaiah lvii. 1, 2.)

"Friday morning, May 7th.—At five o'clock, Mr. Mather preached; after which Mr. Wesley had an interview with our brethren of the High-Church party. But it was not in their power to do us any hurt. Mr. Wesley

* "His face, for an old man," writes a correct observer, of that period, "was one of the finest we have seen. A clear, smooth forehead; an aquiline nose; an eye the brightest and most piercing that can be conceived; and a freshness of complexion, scarcely ever to be found at his years, and impressive of the most perfect health,—conspired to render him a venerable and interesting figure. Few have seen him without being struck with his appearance; and many who had been greatly prejudiced against him have been known to change their opinion, the moment they have been introduced into his presence. . . . In dress, he was a pattern of neatness and simplicity. A narrow, plaited stock; a coat, with a small upright collar; no buckles at his knees; no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel; and a head as white as snow,—gave an idea of something primitive and apostolic; while an air of neatness and cleanliness was diffused over his whole person."

preached in the evening to the children of the Sunday-school, from—‘Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.’ It was calculated to profit both them, and persons of riper years. The sermon was literally composed and delivered in words of not more than two syllables.

“ Saturday, May 8th.—A small party of us accompanied Mr. Wesley to North-Shields; where he preached at noon an excellent sermon, from—‘ But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.’ (Phil. iii. 7.) It was indeed a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

“ Lord’s day, May 9th.—Mr. William Thompson occupied the pulpit this morning at nine o’clock, from—‘ Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.’ At two p.m. Mr. Wesley went to Byker, and addressed several thousands of people in the open air, from—‘ Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;’ (Matt. vii. 24;) and at five p.m. at the Orphan-House, from Ephes. ii. 8. The house was crowded; many hundreds returned, not being able to obtain an entrance. On Monday, Mr. Wesley proceeded on his journey.”

The foregoing extract from the MS. of Mr. Atmore is important, since no record of Mr. Wesley’s movements appears in his printed Journal, from April 10th to May 24th, 1790. He is then found in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen; and, on his return from North Britain, he reaches Newcastle on Friday, the 4th of June, where, in the evening, he preaches at the Orphan-House. The labours of the Sabbath are divided between Gateshead-Fell and Newcastle. On Monday he transcribes the stations of the preachers, preparatory to the assembling of the Conference, at Bristol, in July following. On Tuesday he writes “a Form for settling the Preaching-

houses, without any superfluous words," to be used for the time to come, for all the houses, toward which he contributes anything. "I will no more," says he, "encourage that villainous tautology of lawyers, which is the scandal of our nation." In the evening he preaches to the children of the Sunday-school, upwards of six hundred of whom are present. On the following day he makes the last entry in his Journal respecting the Orphan-House and its Society: "Having despatched all the business I had to do here, I took a solemn leave of this lovely people; perhaps never to see them more in this life:"—a presentiment painfully verified a few months later.

From a mistaken apprehension that the Orphan-House Deed of renewal, executed in 1772, was void, for want of enrolment, Mr. Wesley, in order to prevent any unauthorized occupation of the property on the event of his death, was led, soon after his departure from Newcastle, to draw up and sign the following Indenture of Lease, recognising certain parties, therein named, as tenants of the Orphan-House premises:—

"THIS Indenture, made the sixth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety, witnesseth that I, John Wesley, have let unto William Smith, George Shadford, Robert Spoor, George Jefferson, Alexander Smith, John Greene, and William Slater, my house in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, commonly called the Orphan-House, with the yard, garden, and buildings adjoining thereto, as they now are, for one year, paying to me the rent of one pepper-corn, yearly.

"JOHN WESLEY.

"Witness,

"ALEXANDER MATHER,
"ANDREW INGLIS."

The signature of Mr. Wesley, feeble and tremulous, is very similar to that which is appended to the Journal of the last Conference over which he presided. The document itself derives a mournful interest from its having been the last act of the venerated man in reference to his favourite spot,—the Orphan-House of Newcastle; where so much of his valuable time had been spent, and whence, as a centre of evangelical effort, the stream of Divine truth had, for nearly half a century, steadily flowed, irrigating and fertilizing the moral wilderness around.

During Mr. Wesley's last visit to Newcastle, his sanction was obtained for certain changes, suggested by Mr. Atmore, as to the re-construction and pewing of the gallery of the Orphan-House: changes, certainly, desirable, and, as the event proved, greatly conducive to the interests of the chapel, as well as the better accommodation of the parties worshipping there. The High-Church members, unhappily, made even this a party-question; complaining that whilst Mr. Wesley's consent was given to "remove the staircase, and make some improvements," Mr. Atmore had gone so far as to erect pews! Hitherto the Orphan-House had been without pews; and the men and women sat apart. "The gallery," Mr. Atmore states, "was quite free: not a single seat was let in the whole house. The best part of the building was taken up with the stairs, which were opposite to the pulpit, and led, not merely to the gallery, but to the band-room, and the apartments of the preachers and their families, who resided in the upper part of the building. To the latter, the position of the stairs was peculiarly disadvantageous: no individual could visit the preachers without passing through the house of God; water, coals, &c., were conveyed to the apartments above in the same manner. I therefore thought, that if the gallery were properly *pewed*, and the stairs removed to the outside of the building, it would not only be an advantage to the Society, but would

also put an end to numerous and vexatious inconveniences, which the preachers' families were called daily to endure. I accordingly proposed my plan; and it was approved of and executed. But, although it tended to the comfort and advantage of all parties,—the seat-rents amounting to upwards of £50 annually, which in a few years liquidated all the expenses which had been incurred,—I received considerable ill-will." The cost of the alterations amounted to £260. This sum was advanced by Mr. Smith, and was gradually repaid by the moneys arising from the letting of the pews. The first gallery-stewards were Jonathan Brumwell, George Jefferson, and William Slater.

On Wednesday morning, March 2d, 1791, the mournful event which had for some time been anticipated by the Methodist Societies took place. A few minutes before ten, while several of his friends were kneeling around his bed, the venerated Wesley, "full of days,"—the evening of his well-spent life bright and unclouded,—peacefully exchanges mortality for life; frequently exclaiming, ere the spirit took its flight, "THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US." The funeral was solemnized early in the morning on the Wednesday after his decease; the service being read by the Rev. Mr. Richardson, who was afterwards interred in the same vault.

In the feeling of deep lamentation and regret which pervaded the Connexion, the northern Societies largely shared: all felt that, in the removal of their ecclesiastical head, they had lost a father.

On Sunday, the 13th of March, a funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Atmore in the Orphan-House, on Gal. i. 15, 16: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

The following tribute to the memory of Wesley is inscribed upon a marble tablet, in the City-road chapel, London:—

“THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US.”

Sacred to the Memory of
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.,
SOMETIME FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

A man in learning and sincere piety
scarcely inferior to any:

In zeal, ministerial labours, and extensive usefulness,
superior, perhaps, to all men, since the days of St. Paul.
Regardless of fatigue, personal danger, and disgrace,
he went out into the highways and hedges,
calling sinners to repentance,
and publishing the Gospel of Peace.

He was the Founder of the Methodist Societies,
and the chief promoter and patron
of the plan of Itinerant Preaching;
which he extended through Great Britain and Ireland,
the West Indies and America, with unexampled success.

He was born the xvii. of June, MDCCLII.,
and died the ii. of March, MDCCXCI.,
in sure and certain hope of eternal life,
through the atonement and mediation of
a crucified Saviour.

He was sixty-five years in the ministry,
and fifty-two an Itinerant Preacher:
He lived to see, in these kingdoms only,
about three hundred Itinerant
and one thousand Local Preachers,
raised up from the midst of his own people;
and eighty thousand persons in the Societies under his care.
His name will be ever held in grateful remembrance,
by all who rejoice in the universal spread
of the Gospel of Christ.
SOLI DEO GLORIA.

CHAPTER VII.

1791—1794.

Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration—Conflicting views as to the economy of Methodism—Sacramental controversy—The Hull address—Reply from Newcastle to the Hull circular—First Conference after Wesley's death—District-Meetings instituted—Plan left by Mr. Wesley at his death differently viewed—Sacrament administered at Byker, by Mr. Cownley—Secession at Newcastle—Orphan-House property surreptitiously transferred—Mr. Atmore's version of the affair—Ordination of Messrs. Pritchard, Gaulter, and Kilham, at the Orphan-House—First monthly appointment of preachers—The two sets of trustees combined—Letter of trustees to Mr. Gaulter—Case of Newcastle Orphan-House presented to the District-Meeting—Dr. Coke directed to visit Newcastle—Terms of conciliation agreed to—Suggestions as to the future economy of Methodism—The Lord's Supper allowed to be administered at Byker and North-Shields.

THE death of Mr. Wesley not only cast a pensive gloom over the Societies at large, but awakened, in the breasts of many, painful apprehension as to the future position of Methodism and its people. The place of the Founder no one could supply. The celebrated "Deed of Declaration," executed by him in 1784, had indeed given to "the Conference of the people called Methodists" a legal status and definition, making at the same time legal provision for its self-perpetuation and government; but the church-position of his preachers, and of the Societies under their care, was far from being definite or satisfactory. The conflicting views then entertained, by the Church-Methodists on the one hand, and, on the other, by those who, gathered from the masses of the irreligious, had known only the ministry and services of Methodism, gave rise in Newcastle, as well as in other parts of the Connexion, to much painful discussion and uneasiness.

The future constitution of Methodism was, on the

decease of its founder, forced upon the attention both of preachers and people. Meetings for consultation were held throughout the kingdom. One, convened in Halifax, a few weeks after Mr. Wesley's death, under the auspices of Messrs. Thompson, Mather, and others, gave, perhaps, the key-note to the whole Connexion. In pursuance of the suggestions there made, a meeting of ministers and others was held in Newcastle, on Thursday, May 5th, 1791. "This afternoon," states Mr. Atmore, "we had a comfortable and profitable meeting with several of the brethren, respecting the plan of our future government. The Committee consisted of Messrs. Cownley, Joseph Thompson, Matthew Lowes, John Gaultier, John Stamp, John Ogilvie, John Furness, William Smith, Alexander Smith, Charles Atmore, and John Brettell. I hope these meetings in different parts of the kingdom will be attended with much good."

Several office-bearers, connected with the Society at Hull, appear to have been the first to throw themselves into the arena of controversy, on the points then at issue. In an address, signed by eighteen of their number, bearing date May 4th, 1791, they urge upon the Methodist Societies not to profess themselves Dissenters; not to establish worship in Church-hours; but, whilst maintaining the Itinerant system in its integrity, to attend regularly the services of the Established Church, and there receive, from the hands of its ministers, the holy communion. This, as might be anticipated, called forth various rejoinders; some in unison with the sentiments thus expressed, others in direct antagonism. Among the latter was a well-written and forcible address,* dated "Newcastle-upon-Tyne, July

* Respecting this publication, it is stated in the "Life of Kilham," by Blackwell, that Mr. K., after receiving at York a copy of the Hull Address, drew up in outline an answer, and sent it anonymously to Newcastle; that the leading Methodists there, including the Society and Circuit stewards, adopted it with some trifling alterations; and, adding a postscript of their own, circulated it widely.

5th, 1791," and entitled, "A Reply to the Circular Letter from Hull, addressed to the Stewards and Leaders of the Methodist Societies." To this were appended the following signatures:—William Smith; Alexander Smith, Circuit-Steward; Jonathan Brumwell; George Jefferson; William Slater, Town-Steward. The document was also countersigned by Charles Atmore and Joseph Cownley, two of the ministers then resident in Newcastle.

The writers, whilst bemoaning the loss of their ecclesiastical head, give expression to an earnest wish "to follow him in doctrine and discipline, as far as he followed Christ;" at the same time recognising it as an imperative duty, to "prove all things," and to "hold fast that which is good." As to any obligation still remaining, to attend the services of the Established Church, they ask,—"Are the generality of the ministers of the Church of England truly converted, according to the sense of Scripture? Are they truly called of God? Do they eye the glory of God in the salvation of souls, when they enter the ministry? Do they preach the truth as it is in Jesus? Do they use all their influence to repress vice and encourage true, vital godliness? Do even those who preach the truth, duly administer the Sacrament? never suffering any to communicate who live in gross sin? Do they separate from their community all who continue to rebel against God, and the laws of the Church?" . . . "You find," say they, "the Church is a city broken down, and without walls. You, brethren, at Hull, have ministers in the Church who, perhaps, exceed all others for piety and uprightness of conduct. But do your pious ministers prevent profligate sinners from approaching the altar? Do they resolve they shall not share in the ordinance, till they are reformed, at least, in their outward conduct? Are you, brethren, justified in eating with such, in so solemn an ordinance? Does not the Holy Ghost charge you to come out from among them? Are you not solemnly

called to turn away from sinners and loose professors, who have the form, but deny the power, of godliness? Does not the apostle forbid our eating in private with a man who is called a brother, who is a fornicator? And are you clear in sitting down with the worst of sinners at the Lord's supper?"

After stating that many, because their consciences would not suffer them to unite with open sinners in the solemn commemoration of their Saviour's death, never communicated at all; whilst others went to the Dissenters, in order that they might have the ordinance "in a more sacred manner;" they proceed, "Do you not believe, in your heart, that your preachers are called of God to the work of the ministry? Have they not gifts for the work, which render them acceptable to most that hear them? Are they not, in general, men of sound experience and good morality? Do they not give proof of their piety in their life and conversation? Are they not zealous in promoting the glory of God in your salvation, and in the conversion of all that hear them? Do they not labour night and day for this, preaching publicly, and from house to house? Are you not elected from the world, and by your own choice connected with them? Do they not instruct, exhort, encourage, build up, comfort, rebuke, and in every sense watch over your souls, as they that must give an account to God for you? Has God given them this power, and does He call them to no further labours of love for your furtherance in the Divine life? Has God forbidden these men to baptize your children, and administer to you the Sacrament? Can you suppose that your preachers, who are men of piety and ability to administer the word, should be under the necessity of sending you amongst the ungodly for that ordinance which is the most sacred in Christianity? Would it not be greatly to our advantage to have the Sacrament from those ministers who daily watch over our souls? Would not this show our

order and steadfastness in the faith ; and give the world to see that we act consistent with truth ? ”

The gist of the sacramental controversy, which for some subsequent years agitated the Connexion, is found in the paragraphs just quoted. In this agitation, as well as that which afterwards arose in reference to the discipline of the Body, the trustees and leading members of the Orphan-House Society, differing greatly in sentiment, became active and antagonist partisans.

The first Conference after the death of Wesley was held at Manchester ; the Rev. William Thompson being chosen president, and Dr. Coke, secretary. Mr. Atmore, who attended from Newcastle, states : “ We found ourselves peculiarly circumstanced ; having to adopt a new mode of government ; and the preachers and people being much divided in their sentiments with regard to our relative position and connexion with the Church of England. Yet, such was the great love of God, and His care over His church, that ‘ the unity of the spirit ’ was preserved amongst us ; and the hopes of our foes, together with the fearful forebodings of our friends, were happily frustrated.” The Conference commenced its sittings on Monday, July 26th, and closed on the 8th of the following month. About two hundred of the preachers were present.

One of the most important arrangements entered into at this Conference was the division of the kingdom into Districts. During the interim of the annual assembling of Mr. Wesley and his preachers in Conference, a kind of episcopal oversight and jurisdiction had been exercised by himself, in reference to the Societies at large. In all cases of dispute or difficulty, his judgment was solicited ; and from his decision there was no appeal. To supply the lack thus occasioned by his death, District-Meetings, consisting of the preachers of certain Circuits adjacent to each other, were instituted : not, perhaps, at first, with the intention of their being held at any stated period ; but, as courts of

appeal, to be summoned in any case of emergency which might arise during the intervals of Conference, in any of the Circuits over which their jurisdiction extended. Of the nineteen Districts into which England* was divided, Newcastle, in conjunction with the Sunderland, Hexham, and Alnwick Circuits, formed one; Mr. John Pritchard, the superintendent of the Sunderland Circuit, acting as the chairman. The annual District-Meetings, since held statutedly in the month of May, are in fact Committees of the Conference; exercising over certain localities a limited jurisdiction, and transacting various disciplinary and financial matters, in preparation for the Conference, and thus greatly facilitating the proceedings of that annual assembly.

The Conference of 1791 wisely abstained from passing any judgment as to the church-position of its people, or the controversy then pending as to the administration of the Lord's supper in the chapels of the Connexion. In answer to the inquiry, "Is it necessary to enter into any engagements in respect to our future plan of economy?" they simply place on record, "We engage to follow strictly the plan which Mr. Wesley left us at his death." This decision, though perhaps the only one which at that period could be safely reached, was yet capable of more than one interpretation. The Church-party in Newcastle regarded it as pledging the Connexion to a strict adherence to the services of the Established Church; as prohibiting the holding of any Methodist service in Church-hours; and especially as not allowing any celebration of the holy communion among the Societies of Methodism, save in connexion with "the Church as by law established." Others, however, among whom were Messrs. Cownley, Gaulter, and Kilham, the preachers then resident in the Orphan-House, regarded "the plan left by Mr. Wesley

* Scotland was, at this Conference, divided into two Districts, and Ireland into six.

at his death " as allowing many deviations from strict "Church-of-Englandism." Mr. Wesley, *e.g.*, had, under certain circumstances, permitted service among his people in Church-hours ; had employed as preachers hundreds of men who had never been episcopally ordained, or subjected, in any sense, to Church control ; had even ordained several of his preachers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper among his Societies, as circumstances might render necessary : in fact, throughout his self-denying course of toil, as the ecclesiastical head of "the people called Methodists," he had invariably followed the indications and openings of Divine Providence, wherever recognised ; and hence, although devotedly attached to the Church of which he was a presbyter, yet, whenever the prosecution of what he justly deemed the work of God rendered necessary such a step, his Church attachments and prejudices were held in abeyance.

The contending parties at Newcastle, interpreting the decision of the Conference in accordance with their own views of "the plan which Mr. Wesley left at his death," were in no wise checked in their efforts to secure what each thought right. A large majority of the Society still continuing to request the administration of the Lord's supper from the hands of their own ministers, a course was adopted which, it was hoped, would give no just cause of offence to any. In concert with Mr. Johnson, who had erected a chapel at his own expense, about two miles from Newcastle, it was decided that Mr. Cownley, who had received ordination at the hand of Wesley, should administer this solemn ordinance in Mr. Johnson's chapel at Byker,* thus giving to many devout members of

* In a letter from Mr. Smith to a friend, dated "November 15th, 1793," the following passage occurs :— " You remember John Grundell. He is about to enter the matrimonial state with a young lady not far from Leeds. He settles at Byker ; Mr. Johnson having conveyed the chapel there to him, and fixed for him a salary of £60 a year. John

Society, at the expense of a moderate walk, the privilege they sought. On Sunday, January 8th, 1792, the first service of the kind took place, much to the gratification and profit of many, who, in thus "showing forth the Lord's death," realized His spiritual presence.

Great umbrage was, however, given by this unexceptionable step to the High-Church party worshipping at the Orphan-House; so that "three class-leaders in Newcastle, and about twenty members, left the Society." One of these, Robert Grey, who appears to have acted as the leader of his party, addressed a letter to Mr. Cownley, in terms of bitter reproach; charging him with dishonesty, and with violating his engagements as a preacher of the Body. To this Mr. Cownley replied in mild and courteous language; and, receiving a second letter from Mr. Grey "just as he had returned from a journey much fatigued, and was preparing to go into the country-part of the Circuit,—and having neither time nor inclination to reply to it himself,—he put the communication, unopened, into Mr. Kilham's hand,"* and begged him to write in return. A correspondence followed, which led to the publication by Mr. Kilham of "An Address to the Members and Friends of the Methodist Society in Newcastle;" which, as calculated to spread division and dissension, was condemned by the Conference. The intolerant spirit of the Church-party was painfully evinced in the terms proposed by them as a basis for reconciliation; namely, that the gallery-pews should be removed, and benches placed in their room; that the nine-o'clock preaching on the Sunday morning should be discontinued, and no school be taught in Church-hours; that no Sacrament should be

wishes and expects the Methodist preachers to preach there as usual, and have the sole government of the Society." In 1797, Mr. Grundell's name appears as one of the preachers of the Methodist New Connexion.

* Life of Kilham, p. 148.

administered in any chapel in the Circuit, nor any children baptized save by the ministers of the Church; and that the Liturgical service at Byker, and at Howden Pans, should be no longer used!

In perfect keeping with the spirit which dictated such terms as these, was the attempt now made by the same parties to alienate the trusts of the Orphan-House from the conciliatory and faithful men selected by Mr. Wesley, in 1772; and to transfer them into other hands. The clandestine steps then taken are thus narrated by themselves:—

“ Notwithstanding the engagement entered into by the Conference of 1791, to follow strictly ‘the plan which Mr. Wesley left us at his death,’ there were preachers who agreed thereto, who, in less than six months after, to the utmost extent of their power endeavoured to overturn the original constitution of Methodism, and totally subvert its very spirit.

“ This began very early in the year 1792; and now it was found high time to inquire after the trustees of the Newcastle Orphan-House; that, if possible, it might be preserved on the happy and broad basis on which the Societies were formed.

“ Intelligence was procured, that Mr. Richards was the only surviving trustee of 1745; and, it being accounted all along that the Deed of 1772 was entirely void, (which was also the opinion of a gentleman in the law, who was consulted in the business,) application was made to Mr. Richards, acquainting him with the circumstances, and requesting him to fill up the trusts to the original number of seven, with such persons as strictly adhered to Mr. Wesley’s principles, and by a new Deed to vest the premises in them in order to preserve the House to the purposes for which it was originally intended. Mr. Richards returned a favourable answer, that, being well

satisfied as to Mr. Wesley's intentions respecting the Newcastle Orphan-House, he should cheerfully secure the House on the old plan; but observed, that, on account of his advanced state of life, he should decline continuing in the trust; and, on account of his long absence from Newcastle, desired that about half-a-dozen persons of credit and understanding might recommend those who were well affected to the Church of England, and of the same sentiments in religion with Mr. Wesley.

"In compliance herewith, John Stokoe, John Gates, Robert Grey, John Reed, Peter Wilson, Joshua Wardell, and Robert Grey the younger, were recommended by four clergymen, to be persons well affected to the Church of England; and by eight other persons, to be of the same sentiments in religion with Mr. Wesley;—who, as they believed, would faithfully execute the trusts, and conscientiously appropriate the premises to the carrying on of Mr. Wesley's original design in building the House."

Mr. Atmore's version of the affair is, that this clergyman-trustee was informed that "the Orphan-House was on the eve of being turned into a Dissenting meeting-house, and alienated from the purpose for which it was originally designed; that they (the parties above referred to) were the supporters of primitive Methodism, and true sons of the Church. By this insidious proceeding, they prevailed upon Mr. Richards to execute a certain Deed which *they* drew up, and also to nominate them the sole trustees of the chapel. This was accomplished unknown to the Society at large, with the exception of one member, whom they bound to secrecy." To Mr. Atmore, one of the trustees thus appointed subsequently observed, with consummate *sang froid*, "Our project could not have been completed, if it had not been carried on in the dark!"

Whilst these nefarious proceedings were in progress,

measures were adopted by the preachers of the Newcastle District, to secure the more general administration of the Lord's supper among the northern Societies. At the close of the District-Meeting held in the Orphan-House, May, 1792, John Pritchard, John Gaultier, and Alexander Kilham received ordination at the hands of Messrs. Cownley and Atmore; after which, the preachers united in the celebration of the Lord's supper. Of the strict propriety of this step Mr. Atmore entertained great doubt. The whole transaction was, in fact, ill-timed, and calculated to widen unnecessarily the breach already made. "Our brethren at the Manchester District-Meeting," writes Mr. Atmore, "did the same: * but I am fully persuaded, that these proceedings injured the cause they were intended to promote. They produced general alarm both among the preachers and people."

The preachers appointed by the Conference of 1792 were John Gaultier and Samuel Botts, with Joseph Cownley, then resident as a supernumerary minister in Newcastle. On entering upon the ministerial duties of the year, they found that the Deed so secretly concocted had been signed by Mr. Richards on the 27th of August. Shortly after its enrolment in the Court of Chancery, the obtruding trustees proceeded to the exercise of the trusts thus obtained, by making the first monthly appointment of preachers to the Orphan-House in the following form:—

* These and similar proceedings were severely animadverted upon at the ensuing Conference. In answer to the question, "What rules shall be made concerning ordinations?"—it was enacted,

"1. No ordination shall take place in the Methodist Connexion, without the consent of the Conference first obtained.

"2. If any brother shall break the above-mentioned rule, by ordaining, or being ordained, without the consent of the Conference previously obtained, the brother so breaking the rule does thereby exclude himself." (Min. Conf., 1792.)

“ Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nov. 5th, 1792.

“ We, whose names are hereto subscribed, by virtue of special trust and confidence reposed in us, do hereby nominate and appoint Messrs. John Gaultier, Samuel Botts, and Matthew Lowes,* to preach and expound God’s holy word in the Orphan-House of this town, this present month of November, in the same manner, as near as may be, as the Rev. John Wesley did the same in his lifetime.

“ JOHN GATES, ROBERT GREY, JOHN REED,
“ JOHN STOKOE, PETER WILSON, JOSHUA WARELL,
“ ROBERT GREY, JUN.”

This arbitrary and unauthorized step gave rise to much confusion and alarm. The position of affairs was certainly singular, as well as embarrassing,—two trusts having been created, and two classes of trustees claiming the direction of the Orphan-House and its concerns. The Deed of 1772 was, doubtless, valid; whilst that recently signed by Mr. Richards had no legal force whatever. Yet, acting on the supposition that the former Deed had transmitted the *trusts* to certain parties, whilst the latter had conveyed to others the *legal estate*, the preachers, trustees, stewards, and several of the leaders of the Orphan-House Society, met for consultation. The persons present were, John Gaultier, Matthew Lowes, William Smith, John Greene, George Shadforth, Robert Spoor, George Jefferson, Alexander Smith, William Slater, William Robson, Jacob Atkinson, John Gates, John Stokoe, Robert Grey, John Reed, Peter Wilson, Joshua Wardell, Robert Grey, Jun., Robert Frost, Jonathan Brumwell, and Cuthbert Robinson. All parties were thus fully represented. After lengthened deliberation, it was deemed desirable, in order to secure, as far as practicable,

* Matthew Lowes, though not formally appointed by the Conference, then resided as a supernumerary preacher in the Orphan-House; good Mr. Cownley being thus coolly set aside!

united action, that one trust should be formed from the two opposing ones; and that Messrs. Smith, Stokoe, and Greene, the surviving resident-trustees under the Deed of 1772, should forthwith meet and elect four other persons to be associated with them as the sole trustees of the Orphan-House estate. They accordingly met on the 27th of November; and, by a majority of their number, (Mr. Smith being the one dissentient,*) elected Robert Grey, John Reed, Peter Wilson, and Joshua Wardell as co-trustees with themselves. One important step was thus gained; yet the High-Church party, having the Orphan-House in effect under their own control, achieved, as regarded by themselves, a signal triumph. A Deed, in accordance with the above arrangement, was at once drawn up, and duly executed. The persons, also, to whom Mr. Richards was supposed to have conveyed the freehold of the property, transferred by Deed, some months after, their right and interest in the same, to the seven gentlemen named on the 27th inst. as trustees.

Their first step, when duly invested with the trusteeship of the Orphan-House, was to address the following letter to Mr. Gaulter, somewhat authoritatively pointing out to him their future course of procedure:—

“ Newcastle, Dec. 6th, 1792.

“ MR. JOHN GAULTER,

“ We take the present opportunity to lay before you the principles which will regulate our proceedings in

• Mr. Smith's view of the whole case was thus given in a letter to a friend:—“The seven gentlemen who assumed so much power, and took upon them to appoint preachers, now find their power to be greatly limited. All that Mr. Richards could convey to them, and all that he himself was possessed of, was what lawyers term the legal title. The full power of the trust he had conveyed before, in 1772; which continues in full force, although the Deed was not enrolled in Chancery. Hence we find the present trustees are, John Stokoe, John Greene, and myself. We have it now in our power to elect new

executing the important office of trustees of the Orphan-House of this town.

“ Impressed with a sense of the nature of the duty, no difficulties that may occur shall intimidate us; rather, we will with firmness and resolution persevere in a conscientious discharge thereof: yet, at the same time, we entertain no idea of pre-eminence over our brethren; believing ourselves, in an especial manner, the servants of all.

“ We purpose to keep in view the nature and design of the ‘United Societies’ formed by Mr. Wesley;—that he was at the head of no sect or party; that he formed no distinct body of people. The observation he made in the first Conference, held in the year 1744,—‘It is our peculiar glory not to form any new sect, but, abiding in our own Church, to do all the good we possibly can,’—was often repeated by him, and was a leading characteristic of the name given to him and his followers. And this evinces the necessity we are under to preserve those times, for our public worship, which do not interfere with those of the national Church.

“ It is also our peculiar glory to have a regular succession of itinerant preachers. This we heartily approve of, and shall give it every support in our power; and, while the Conference ‘follows strictly the plan Mr. Wesley left us at his death,’ we shall appoint those persons whom they name and send to preach in this House.

“ The words of the trust being so full and explicit in respect to the appointment of preachers, it is not in our power (if we execute the trust at all) to adopt any longer space, but monthly do the same. We hope, therefore, no invidious reflection will be made on this part of our

trustees; but I am afraid we will not readily agree in this business. The members of Society so perfectly detest the conduct of these High-Churchmen, that I believe they would rather build a new House, than have these men for their rulers.”

conduct, which is exactly within the line of our indispensable duty.

"We therefore, in conformity to the said trusts, do nominate and appoint Messrs. John Gaultier, Samuel Botts, and Matthew Lowes, and such others as are authorized by the rules of the Conference, to preach and expound God's holy word in the Orphan-House of this town, this present month of December, in the same manner, as near as may be, as the Rev. John Wesley did the same in his lifetime.

"PETER WILSON, JOHN REED, JOSHUA WARDELL,
"JOHN STOKOE, JOHN GREENE, ROBERT GREY."

Similar appointments were for some time made monthly, and duly recorded in the Minute-Book of the trustees.

The resolution of the late Conference, when by lot it was decided "that the Lord's supper should not be administered by any person among the Societies in England and Ireland, for the ensuing year, on any consideration whatsoever, except in London," placed the sacramental controversy, for that period, in a state of abeyance: yet, in Newcastle, from the expressed determination of the now legally-constituted trustees of the Church-party, that in the Orphan-House neither service in Church-hours nor any administration of the Lord's supper should ever be allowed, great uneasiness was felt. The trustees themselves were anxious to be confirmed in their views and procedure by some Conference sanction and authority; and hence they drew up for presentation to the Newcastle District-Meeting, held in April, 1793, a narrative of their proceedings, headed, "The Case of the Newcastle Orphan-House." Mr. Pritchard, the chairman, having verbally replied, that the preachers thought it best to refer the whole matter to the consideration of the Conference shortly to be held in Leeds, the trustees gravely place on record the following

decision:—"On a mature deliberation of the whole of the premises, we resolve to wait the determination of the Conference before we proceed to compulsive measures."

The stand-point of the trustees in their letter to Mr. Gaulter, and indeed throughout the sacramental controversy, was the declaration of Wesley, as quoted from his "Farther Thoughts on a Separation from the Church," —that "this was our peculiar glory, not to form any new sect, but, abiding in our own Church, to do to all men all the good we possibly could." They lost sight, however, of the fact, that during the intervening years, notwithstanding Wesley's Church-prepossessions and prejudices, a most important sect *had* risen up; "the People called Methodists" wanting only the due administration of the holy Sacraments to constitute them, in every Scriptural view of the subject, a Christian church. So urgently and painfully, at this very period, was this felt to be a desideratum, that the Conference, in its session of 1793, places the following on record:—"The subject is now come to its crisis. We find we have no alternative, but to comply with the requisition of several of our Societies, or entirely to lose them." "Can we suffer these," say they, "to forsake their faithful pastors, and possibly run into the jaws of some ravening wolf, when the point in contest must be allowed by all to be *unessential* to salvation?"

No reference is made to "the Case of the Newcastle Orphan-House" in the Minutes of this year. Dr. Coke was, however, directed to visit Newcastle, and to adjust, so far as was practicable, the points in dispute. "The trustees," it is stated, "very readily met the assistant, Mr. Taylor, and Dr. Coke; when, after seriously deliberating upon the business, the following minutes were agreed to:—"

"Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Sept. 9th, 1793.

"We, Thomas Coke, Doctor of Laws, itinerant Methodist preacher; Henry Taylor, and John Peacock,

itinerant Methodist preachers, named by Conference to preach in Newcastle Circuit the present year and now residing in the Orphan-House of the said town; Matthew Lowes, Methodist preacher, resident in an apartment of the said Orphan-House; and William Smith, gentleman, John Stokoe, gentleman, John Greene, gentleman, Robert Grey, bricklayer, John Reed, house-carpenter, and Joshua Wardell, grocer, severally trustees of the said Orphan-House; taking into our serious consideration the state of the said Orphan-House since the death of the Rev. John Wesley, and being very desirous that all things may go on in the same manner as in Mr. Wesley's lifetime, as far as circumstances will permit, do, upon full information of the subject, state the following particulars:—

“In the year 1745, Mr. Wesley conveyed the said Orphan-House and premises to seven trustees, their heirs and assigns for ever; who, after the death of the two Mr. Wesleys, were monthly, or oftener at their discretion, to appoint fit persons to preach therein.

“In the year 1784, Mr. Wesley by ‘Deed of Declaration’ specified what was meant by the Methodist Conference.

“Now, although the ‘Deed of Declaration’ doth not supersede the Indenture of 1745, yet, forasmuch as it appears to have been the desire of Mr. Wesley, that all the preachers in the Methodist Connexion be named by the said Conference; and the said Conference being apprehensive that the plan of Itinerancy cannot be effectually carried on if the trustees appoint the preachers; and the present trustees of the said Orphan-House heartily approving of the said plan of Itinerancy, and being willing that the desire of Mr. Wesley may be complied with; and also, having no other view in the exercise of the trusts, than to preserve the simple, original plan which Mr. Wesley established and left at his death; and which sentiment the said Conference have declared their in-

tention of adhering most strictly to, and have strongly recommended to the Societies at large;—in order to prevent any misconstruction of this union of sentiment, we unanimously agree to the following explication:—

“The said trustees are acknowledged the legal successors of the trustees of 1745, and in consequence thereof are invested with the said Orphan-House and premises.

“The Conference shall name the preachers; and the preachers now and from time to time hereafter thus nominated, shall have the free use of the said Orphan-House, and also free liberty to exercise the whole office of Methodist preachers, as directed by the Minutes of Conference now existing: subject, nevertheless, to the following restrictions and regulations:—

“There shall be no service performed in the said Orphan-House on the Lord’s day, between the hours of ten o’clock in the morning and four in the evening,—the quarterly giving of the tickets only excepted; nor any Sacraments administered therein without the consent of the whole of the trustees. Nor shall notice be published in the said Orphan-House of any service to be performed in any other place in the Methodist Connexion between the said hours of the Lord’s day, nor of the Sacraments being administered at any time or place whatsoever, without such consent as aforesaid.

“The week-day-evening preaching shall continue on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, at seven o’clock, as usual.

“The said Orphan-House shall be open for public worship every morning at five o’clock; and for such mornings as the preacher doth not attend, the majority of the trustees for the time being shall at their discretion appoint fit persons, members of the Society, to conduct such morning public worship.

“ If any member in the Methodist Connexion do at any time in the said Orphan-House act contrary in any matter to the above explication, the majority of the trustees for the time being shall, if they judge proper, discharge such person from officiating and residing in the said Orphan-House.

“ If the Conference shall refuse or neglect to nominate preachers, or shall separate from the Church of England, the majority of the trustees shall for ever after, in either case, appoint the preachers for the said Orphan-House.

“ Lastly, that the stewards of the Society shall manage the finances of the Orphan-House, as hitherto has been done; provided that a distinct account of the money received for the pews be kept in a separate book, which book shall be open to the inspection of the trustees, or any member of the Society, at all times; provided, also, that the surplus of the finances be applied to the discharge of the debts of the Orphan-House, as long as there be any debt upon the premises.

“ The above articles have been agreed upon, the 10th day of September, 1793.

“ Signed,

“ THOMAS COKE, MATTHEW LOWES, JOHN GREENE,

“ HENRY TAYLOR, WILLIAM SMITH, ROBERT GREY,

“ JOHN PEACOCK, JOHN STOKOE, JOHN REED,

“ JOSHUA WARDELL.”

The articles, thus agreed to, were confirmed by the ministers of the Newcastle District, at a meeting held in the Orphan-House on the 8th of November, 1793; when Mr. Ward, of Durham, was directed to embody the whole in a Deed, to be drawn up by him for that purpose. This, when presented, proving unsatisfactory to the “ major part of the trustees,” the subject was postponed till the 15th of May, 1794; when, at a meeting of the preachers of the District then held, an amended draft prepared by

Mr. Stokoe was accepted. Duplicate Deeds were, on the 30th of that month, duly executed: one being placed in the custody of the trustees, the other handed over to the care of the preachers for the time being resident in the Orphan-House. The only deviations from the articles previously agreed upon were,—that “there shall be preaching at least two nights of each week, exclusive of Sunday evenings;” and that “no other doctrine” shall be preached, “than is contained in the said John Wesley’s Notes on the New Testament, and the first four volumes of Sermons by him wrote and published.”

To the arrangements thus entered into Mr. Smith was a most reluctant party. None of his co-trustees were at this period members of the Society; they having “intermittent,” that they might not “countenance and support measures of which they could not approve;” and hence the hope of cordial co-operation was scarcely entertained. “I strongly opposed,” writes Mr. Smith, “the excluding the worship of God from that house during the best part of the Lord’s day. I told the preachers assembled at the District-Meeting, that, if they ratified this agreement, I would recommend them to draw the portrait of Messrs. Grey and Stokoe at full length, and place it at the entering in of the Orphan-House, with this inscription, ‘This image, and not the God of heaven, is to be worshipped here;—that is, its will is to be obeyed, from ten o’clock in the morning, till four in the afternoon; after the expiration of which time, the worshippers of the great Jehovah, the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be permitted to assemble.’” The only point gained by the above-related agreement, was the settlement of the question as to the appointment of preachers to the Orphan-House pulpit: in all other respects great dissatisfaction and uneasiness still remained.

In Newcastle, as elsewhere, the future constitution of the Methodist Societies, whilst in itself a subject for grave

and prayerful consideration, gave rise to many conflicting suggestions and theories. Several of the proposals, then made, may in this day excite a smile. At the meeting of the Newcastle District, held in May, 1794, it was suggested, that two of the elder brethren should be appointed to visit the several Societies during the year; that they should travel together,—their determinations on any case brought before them being final till the ensuing Conference, when their work and authority of this kind should cease, and two others be appointed to succeed them: that wherever it is desired by any of the Societies, the sacrament of the Lord's supper should be administered, not by Bishops consecrated to the work, but by the President and Ex-Presidents of the Conference; and that, when the number of these is more than six, the six oldest shall officiate in rotation.

At a convention of senior preachers, held in Lichfield,* April 2d, 1794, an order of General Superintendents, or Bishops, was suggested; each of whom should visit every Society in his District, once in every year; his decision on all cases brought before him being binding till the Conference. It was also proposed, that all preachers appointed by the Conference to administer the Sacraments should be ordained first as deacons, and afterwards as elders; and that England should be divided into seven Districts; namely, London, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester, and Newcastle. The preachers then named to act as General Superintendents were Dr. Coke, Messrs. Mather, Hanby, Taylor, Pawson, Moore, and Bradburn. The ensuing Conference, though not endorsing any of these suggestions, passed a series of important enactments, which, as tending to allay the

* The preachers then present, were Dr. Coke, (the convener of the Meeting,) Messrs. Mather, Taylor, Pawson, Bradburn, Rogers, Moore, and A. Clarke.

general uneasiness then existing, may be regarded as the germ of the subsequent "General Plan of Pacification."

At the Conference of 1793, it was resolved, "that the sacrament of the Lord's supper should not be administered by the preachers in any part of the Connexion, except where the whole Society is unanimous for it, and will not be contented without it." This year the privilege was somewhat restricted; it being resolved, "that the Lord's supper should not be administered in future, where the union and concord of the Society can be preserved without it." Yet, under this restriction, leave was given for the administration of the Lord's supper at Byker and North-Shields; and, in the Sunderland Circuit, at Hilton-Fry and Ivestone. Thus, to some extent, the sacramental requirements of the Orphan-House Society were indirectly met.

CHAPTER VIII.

1795—1851.

Articles of Pacification—Kilham, an agitator—“Progress of Liberty” published—Letter of London preachers demanding investigation—Kilham’s cynical “Examination”—Trial of Kilham by Newcastle District-Meeting—The Newcastle “Address”—Benson’s reply—Kilham’s expulsion—Robert Johnson’s letter to trustees—Their answer—Refusal of trustees to allow service in Church-hours—Cordwainers’ Hall rented for Sabbath-worship—Early morning service conducted by trustees—Ebenezer chapel rented—Chapel in Westgate taken on lease—Death of Robert Grey—Orphan-House opened in Church-hours—Appointment of new trustees—Erection of chapel in the New Road—First Missionary Meeting in Newcastle—Brunswick-place chapel opened—The Duke of Northumberland a contributor towards its erection—Ann Nichol—The Newcastle Circuit divided—District Sunday-School Society—Blenheim-street chapel opened—Centenary Meeting for the Northern Districts—First Wesleyan Conference held in Newcastle—Ashanti princes—Parker’s Centenary picture presented to the Conference—Reform agitation.

IMPORTANT steps were taken, at the Conference of 1795, to establish “a general and lasting peace and union” throughout the Methodist Connexion. “Articles of Agreement for general Pacification” were unanimously adopted. Each minister of the Body was therefore bound, in consistency, as well as from a regard to the general interests of the Connexion, to give to the working of this new order of things a fair trial; especially, as the “delegated trustees,” assembled from all parts of the kingdom, had expressed themselves as “sensible of the liberality and candour” manifested in the propositions made, and had assured the Conference, that they should “cheerfully acquiesce” in their “final determination.”

Unhappily for the peace and welfare of the Newcastle District, one of its superintendents—the afterwards-noted

Alexander Kilham—set himself to frustrate the great object which the Conference had earnestly hoped and laboured to secure. Several anonymous pamphlets had previously been published by him, reflecting injuriously on the character of his brethren in the ministry, and representing certain radical changes in the constitution of Methodism as absolutely necessary. He now sends forth a most objectionable pamphlet, bearing the title,—“The Progress of Liberty among the People called Methodists: to which is added the Outlines of a Constitution. Humbly recommended to the serious Consideration of the Preachers and People, late in Connexion with Mr. Wesley. By Alexander Kilham, Minister of the Gospel. Alnwick, 1795.” In its pages, the character of the preachers generally is acrimoniously assailed; some are charged with immorality; and others are characterized as swindlers; their annual scrutiny of each other is designated a mock examination, whilst the language in which the writer indulges is more than once not only slanderous, but indecent. The direct tendency of the whole was to create, in reference to the ministers of the Body, dissatisfaction and distrust; and seriously to injure the work of God.

It will not, therefore, excite surprise, that, on the publication of this obnoxious pamphlet, disciplinary action in reference to its author was imperatively demanded. Hence the following letter, addressed “To Mr. William Hunter, chairman of the Newcastle District:”—

“London, Dec. 5th, 1795.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“WE have met solemnly to consider the pamphlet lately published by Alexander Kilham, entitled, ‘The Progress of Liberty;’ and think ourselves obliged to write to you on the subject, as the chairman of that District in which Mr. Kilham labours. We detest the

spirit of the book, and are persuaded it contains most malicious expressions against the body of preachers in general, and against respectable individuals in particular. We have no doubt the pamphlet has an immediate tendency to prejudice our people against their preachers, and to destroy the work of God. If it go into the world at large, it must give the public the most unfavourable opinion concerning us. It also tends to destroy our Preachers' Fund, by holding out the assistants as a company of whining Jesuits, and, consequently, atrocious knaves. So bad a book has not been published among us since the first revival of the work of God. We, therefore, as persons implicated in Mr. Kilham's charges, immediately advise and claim a District-Meeting: for Mr. Kilham can do us no harm as an open enemy, but he will do us unspeakable hurt as a secret one. If Mr. Kilham continue among us after such gross and malicious assertions, we to all intents and purposes plead guilty, and must by the public be supposed to be a company of villains. We look up to you and the other members of the District-Committee for redress. Our wounded cause, and the characters of preachers in general, call for it immediately. The cause of God is at stake; and, if justice is not done in this case, we may take our farewell of primitive Methodism. We desire you will read this our testimony against the malice, pride, and audaciousness with which the pamphlet now under consideration is replete.

“We are

“Your affectionate brethren,

“THOMAS COKE,	GEORGE STORY,
“JOHN PAWSON,	ADAM CLARKE,
“FRANCIS WRIGLEY,	WALTER GRIFFITH,
“WILLIAM WEST,	GEORGE WHITFIELD,
“THOMAS RANKIN,	RICHARD REECE.”

Mr. Hunter, the chairman of the District, was one of the excellent of the earth, devoted to his great work as a preacher of the Gospel; but, taking no active part in the general affairs of the Connexion, he was but little qualified to cope with the restless brother whose case was thus formally brought before him. During the hesitation and delay of the chairman in fixing the day for trial, Mr. Kilham, on receiving a copy of the complaint presented against him, publishes forthwith, in a pamphlet of thirty-five pages, "A candid Examination" of what he cynically designates, "the London Methodistical Bull;" reiterating, in equally virulent terms, the statements specially complained of, and in effect bidding defiance to those who were now called upon to adjudicate his case. To this "Examination" is prefixed a copy of the London letter, headed by the figure of a bull, belching forth flames; a black border surrounding the whole letter, as though it called forth the deepest mourning throughout the land. "This production," Dr. Smith observes,* "like the preceding, assumes the perfect accuracy of all the author's allegations and assumptions, as though they had been admitted facts. As such, the author proceeds to reason upon them, as if utterly oblivious that the truth and propriety of these statements were the very things for which he was called to account."

The publication of this inflammatory missive, in connexion with the extensive personal influence exercised by its author, awakened almost general sympathy in his favour, and in furtherance of the objects he professedly sought to accomplish. Hence, on the very day appointed for the assembling of the District-Committee, a numerous and influential meeting of the office-bearers and principal friends in the Newcastle, Sunderland, Alnwick, and Hexham Circuits was convened in Newcastle, under the

* History of Wesleyan Methodism, vol. ii., p. 57.

presidency of Mr. William Smith, when it was unanimously resolved,—

“ 1. That the present is a suitable opportunity for stating the sentiments of the forementioned Societies upon the following subjects to the Connexion at large:—

“ 2. That the prosperity of religion amongst the Methodists is in danger from the want of a fuller communication between the Circuits and the Conference, and from the assistants having a power to act independently of the people in the government of the Societies.

“ 3. That the following Address fully expresses the sentiments of the meeting.

“ 4. That it be printed, and sent to the principal Societies and preachers throughout the kingdom.

“ 5. That the following brethren be appointed a Committee for carrying the above resolutions into effect:—

“ WILLIAM SMITH,	}	<i>Newcastle.</i>
“ GEORGE JEFFERSON,		
“ ROBERT FROST,	}	<i>Byker.</i>
“ JOHN GRUNDELL,		
“ ROBERT WHITFORD,	}	<i>Hexham.</i>
“ RALPH ANNETS,		
“ LUKE MATTISON,	}	<i>Alnwick.</i>
“ ROBERT CAIRNS,		
“ ROBERT HUTTON,	}	<i>Monkwearmouth.</i>
“ MICHAEL LONGRIDGE,		

How far the gathering together of these friends at such a juncture, and for such a purpose, was designed to influence or intimidate the members of the District-Committee, can now be only matter of conjecture.

From the MS. Journal of the late Rev. John Stamp, at that period a guest in the house of Mr. Smith, we extract the following:—

“ February 18th, 1796. This day at two o'clock, P.M.,

the preachers had all arrived at Newcastle. The District-Meeting began to examine Mr. Kilham's book, entitled, 'The Progress of Liberty amongst the Methodists,' in which many things are said highly prejudicial to the interests of religion. Many friends were assembled from different parts of the Alnwick Circuit, and the District, to espouse Mr. Kilham's side.

" February 19th. The preachers were all employed in reading over Mr. Kilham's book: all dined at Mr. William Smith's, to the number of nineteen or twenty. The friends appear to be much disappointed in not being allowed to sit upon the trial of Mr. Kilham. Mr. Carlill preached a curious, though upon the whole a useful, sermon.

" February 20th. Most of the brethren from the country returned home yesterday, hurt in their minds by an idea, that the preachers had slighted them. The reason they were not admitted to the meeting was, that the existing laws of Methodism gave no authority for it. The only act which was accomplished, was the deferring sentence upon Mr. Kilham until the next meeting of the District; he engaging not to publish anything upon the subject until then."

The tame, not to say the evasive conclusion, thus reached, was worded as follows:—"It is agreed, that, not from fear of consequences, being as we believe in our duty under God, but from brotherly love to Mr. Kilham, we put off passing judgment upon him, till the next District-Meeting, appointed for the 29th of June; provided Mr. Kilham agree with us not to publish or print anything on either side till that time." The regular and ordinary meeting* of the Newcastle District took place at Sunderland on the 18th of May, instead of the day previously fixed upon. The first finding of the Committee was,— "We propose to Mr. Kilham, as his case is singular, to

* Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, 1845, p. 421.

refer it to the Conference ; on condition he will with us bind himself not to print or publish anything till that time ; lest it should cause more uneasiness and division in our different Circuits." With this Mr. Kilham refused to comply ; and, after considerable conversation, the clause was added,—"The above is the conclusion to which we are come ; but Mr. Kilham refuses to accede to it : we therefore leave him to his own conscience, and the determination of his brethren at the Conference." The accused was thus most leniently dealt with, if dealt with at all.

The "Address," to which allusion has been made, was published as a quarto sheet, and circulated very widely ; bearing the title,—"An Address to the Methodist Societies in general, and to the Quarterly and District Meetings in particular, throughout the Kingdom." A great sensation was produced ; whilst from various quarters, and from able pens, answers sprang up. The chief topics of complaint will appear in the synopsis of a well-written and triumphant reply from the pen of the Rev. Joseph Benson, who for many years had been on terms of the closest intimacy with the chairman of the meeting.

After premising, that with the best intentions "we may inadvertently give occasion to much evil," he expresses his regret and fear that "when the disputes as to the administration of the Sacraments, and service in Church-hours, were scarcely settled, we should now be contending about plans of government and external ordinances, till the life of religion, and all that was worth contending for, might be lost." The Methodists, till lately, were not a people ; and had only become such "by the word of God and prayer, and in the exercise of that discipline which some parts of the Address were manifestly calculated to overthrow."

In answer to the complaint, "that, according to the present rules of Conference, the Methodist preachers

rule their people without consulting them,"* he contends that the authority of the preachers was so restricted, they could scarcely be said to rule at all; that the recommendation of a leader was requisite ere any could by ticket be received into the Society; that leaders and stewards were never appointed without previous consultation with those already in office; that no trustee could be removed from the Society, till his crime had been proved in the presence of the trustees and leaders; but that by the "Laws of Pacification," recently enacted, the trustees could put a preacher on his trial, in defiance of his colleagues, of the District-Meeting, and the whole Conference; that the leaders and stewards were generally consulted as to persons coming out to travel, and he should be glad to have an express rule on that subject; whilst, as to collections, it was much to be desired that the preachers should be released from all responsibility and care.

The objection, that "we are a Society in which the people have no voice," is met by the statement, that, "if they speak by their leaders, stewards, and trustees, they have a voice in everything of importance that respects any part of our doctrine, discipline, or economy, and in some things a very loud and authoritative voice indeed." "You are endeavouring," continues he, "to form a powerful com-

* "The present rules of the Conference," say the writers of the Address, "imply that the people should not be consulted. For instance, what rules require an assistant to consult leaders and stewards in the appointment of new leaders and stewards, or in the reception of members? or the Quarterly Meetings in the appointment of local preachers; recommending preachers to travel, or their exclusion; the making and receiving of collections, or in the division of Circuits? Who can deny, that we are a Society in which the people have no voice? in which they are not permitted to deliberate on the choice of their own officers, the formation of their own laws, or the distribution of their own property? We have no alternative on many of these points but resistance."

bination against that Scriptural plan of proceeding, which has been attended with such happy effects in this and in other countries : and although the measure is purely your own, or, rather, the contrivance of some two or three of you, yet you would persuade us that you speak the language of the people, and that your letter states the sentiments of the Societies in your Circuits; whereas I may venture to assert, that not one in five hundred of them knows of your writing! So much for your regard for the people."

In reply to the threat, "that the people, by withholding funds, do not want the means of effecting their own designs," Mr. Benson answers, "Well, my brethren, and what then? We, too, have at least one thing in our power: we can quietly withdraw from the society of such unreasonable men. . . . After spending our youth, and health, and strength in ministering to those who so un worthily requite us, we can seek an asylum, amidst the increasing infirmities and afflictions of declining age, in some sequestered spot, crying out, in the language of the prophet, 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.'"

After giving them credit for "designing a stricter union of preachers and people," and being wishful to preserve "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," he proceeds: "But how exceedingly are you overseen, when, in a letter, the professed design of which was peace and unity, you inadvertently throw out so many expressions which, even if true, could have no tendency but to exasperate; but, if false, as many affirm them to be, will be found much more provoking!" and, after urging the laying aside of all that is scurrilous and unfounded, he thus concludes: "Believe me, you have it not in your power to harm us. What do we gain by serving you, but an uncertain and precarious subsistence, with reproach, labour, and disquiet, and an unsettled, wandering life?"

Travelling almost daily, in all weathers, sometimes indeed on horseback, but frequently of late years on foot, that we may bring you the glad tidings of salvation as free of expense as possible, and may seek and save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. . . . While many, if not of you, yet of our people, who through us, or our predecessors in the work, rose from nothing, and are not a whit before some of us in abilities or diligence, have amassed great wealth, purchased estates, and built them houses of cedar, *we*, with our wives and little ones, are still dependent upon the contributions of others for a maintenance; removing from place to place, year by year, day by day, and leading a pilgrim-like life, at your call, and to serve your eternal interests, if not even sometimes to gratify your curiosity or your itch for novelty. And why? Because we are in love with such an unsettled and wandering life? Alas, my brethren, you know little of human nature, if you think so. Make the experiment yourselves. Several of you are preachers, and believe yourselves called to work. Come out then, and go with us into the highways and hedges, travelling without intermission from city to city, from town to town, from village to village, to publish the Gospel of the grace of God. Give up the gains of your trade and merchandise; leave your warm and comfortable habitations, with all your connections and engagements, and spend the rest of your days in helping us to seek and save lost souls. But, if you cannot or will not do this,—if it be too great a sacrifice for you to make,—at least, let us request of you not to discourage and thereby hinder those who have already made it, or are disposed so to do. Do not weaken our hands in God, or add to our burden, already greater than we, frequently, know how to bear. But, on the contrary, as I have by experience known many of you do in days of old, lighten it all you can, or assist us to bear it. . . . Let us draw in one yoke, and unite our counsels and endeavours to help forward the great

work of reforming and renewing all mankind ; for which the Son of God came into the world, and for which He shed His precious blood. Let us strive to restore the spirit of primitive Methodism, which some think is greatly decayed amongst us ;—the spirit of seriousness and watchfulness, of prayer and praise, of self-denial and mortification, of zeal and diligence, of simplicity and sincerity, of meekness and patience, of joy and love, of deadness to the world and devotedness to God. Here, my brethren, there is work enough for us all, and work that must be done, or, notwithstanding any and all external regulations, our glory will depart from us, and we shall not be able to bear witness like our late aged father, with our dying lips, that ‘the best of all is, God is with us.’ Believe me, my brethren, believe him, or rather believe the Scriptures, this is ‘the best of all.’ If we have this, we shall go on and prosper, in spite of all opposition, and notwithstanding all the late contentions, whereby Satan has thrust sore at us that we might fall. But, if we have not this, no alterations of our plan, or supposed amendments of our system, will be able to preserve us. O God! do Thou arise for us! Do Thou stir up Thy power, and come among us, and save us !”

The most objectionable part of the “Address”* was the postscript, in which the Committee proposed an

* On several points there dwelt upon, the present regulations of the Connexion are :—

“The leaders'-meeting has a right to declare any person on trial, improper to be received into Society ; and after such declaration the superintendent shall not receive such person into Society.

“No person shall be expelled from the Society, till his offence has been proved to the satisfaction of a leaders'-meeting : which meeting is also entitled to declare in its verdict, whether the facts alleged are, or are not, violations of the laws of God, or of our Body. Every expelled member has a right of appeal to a Minor District-Meeting, to the annual District-Meeting, and to the Conference.

“No person shall be appointed a leader, or society-steward, or poor-steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with a

extensive and well-organized system of agitation. To this, happily, but little response was given by the Connexion at large.

At the Conference of 1796, Mr. Kilham, after a careful investigation of the charges presented against him, is, by the unanimous decision of his brethren, declared to be "unworthy of continuing a member of the Methodist Connexion," and, as such, is solemnly expelled.* Neither this painful event, nor yet the subsequent establishment of "the Methodist New Connexion," appears to have occasioned much fluctuation in the numerical returns of the Newcastle Circuit. In 1797, a decrease of fourteen members is reported; and the following year a similar falling off takes place; after which the numbers in Society are for some time annually augmented.

The Church-trustees of the Orphan-House, whilst standing aloof from the Kilhamite agitation, rigidly adhered to the non-occupation of their trust-premises during the mid-day hours of the Sabbath, as specified in their Deed of agreement with the preachers and others. From time immemorial, a lovefeast for the Societies throughout the Circuit had been annually held in the Orphan-House in the afternoon of Christmas-day. That festival falling this year on Sunday, it was taken for granted, that, as by the *united* consent of the trustees service *might* be held in the said house in Church-hours, or even the administration of the Sacraments be permitted

leaders'-meeting. The nomination to be in the superintendent, and the approval or disapproval in the leaders'-meeting."

All the Funds of the Connexion are under the direction of Committees, composed of ministers and laymen.

"Before any superintendent proposes a preacher to the Conference as proper to be received on trial, such preacher must be approved of at the March Quarterly Meeting."

* An exceedingly clear and impartial narrative of the whole transaction is given by Dr. Smith in his invaluable History of Wesleyan Methodism, vol. ii., pp. 60 *et seq.*

there, no barrier would be placed against the observance of this long-established custom. The consent of the trustees was therefore confidently requested by Mr. Johnson, the superintendent of the Circuit, in the following letter, addressed to them through Mr. Grey:—

“Orphan-House, Nov. 22d, 1796.

“DEAR SIR,

“In consequence of the agreement entered into by the trustees of the Orphan-House and my predecessor, I beg leave to lay the following request before you, sir, and the rest of the trustees. As Christmas-day this year falls on Sunday, (which will not soon occur again,) I wish, for the convenience of country friends, that the trustees would permit us to begin the lovefeast at two o’clock on that day. Hoping you will lay my request before the trustees, I shall expect your answer as soon as convenient.

“Yours affectionately,

“ROBERT JOHNSON.”

To this request, certainly not an unreasonable one, the following reply was given:—

“Newcastle, Nov. 23d, 1796.

“DEAR SIR,

“In answer to yours, we beg to observe, that, as trustees of the Orphan-House, it is our one design to preserve the house for the purposes specified in the Deed, so solemnly confirmed.

“At the execution of that Deed it was perfectly understood by all subscribing parties that Christmas-day would in rotation fall on a Sunday.

“We are, dear sir,

“Yours affectionately,

“JOHN STOKOE, ROBERT GREY,

“JOHN GREENE, JOHN REED,

“JOSHUA WARDELL.”

The short-sighted policy which dictated this reply served greatly to strengthen the ill-suppressed feelings of dissatisfaction which smouldered in the breasts of many ; especially when it was remembered, that no provision of the Orphan-House Deed would have been violated, had the request been granted. Hence, notwithstanding their attachment to the House which Wesley built, the erection or occupancy of another place of worship, where the privileges to which they justly regarded themselves as entitled might be secured, was a mode of relief, on which they were soon, almost necessarily, led to dwell. Several months, however, elapsed, ere the decision was reached, that, unless what they sought for could be obtained in connexion with the Orphan-House, the step just named must be taken. On the 19th of September, 1797, Messrs. Yewdall and Bogie, the preachers then stationed in Newcastle, addressed a respectful yet urgent letter to the trustees, stating that many of the Society and congregation, from long-cherished habits, and others, from better reasons, could not profitably, or with a good conscience, unite in the services of the Established Church ; nor could they meet with any body of professing Christians so "congenial to their sentiments" as those of the Methodist persuasion ; that others, because no Methodist service was held during the most appropriate hours of the Lord's day, "betook themselves to the fields to meditate," and were thus deprived of the benefit of social worship ; that there were not wanting those who were seeking to divide the Society on this very point ; and hence, unless the Orphan-House were opened for worship at the times suggested, and the Sacraments duly administered to the Society there, the erection of another house would present itself as their only remedy. This they deprecated ; and thus they conclude :—"Suffer us, then, to plead the emergency of the case, and to urge upon you, by well-timed condescension, to prevent the unnecessary expense

of another chapel, in granting the privileges we so ardently solicit. In so doing, you will serve the interests of Christ's kingdom in the world, and confer a lasting obligation on your brethren and servants in Christ Jesus.”*

The following answer was quickly given:—

“ Newcastle, Sept. 22d, 1797.

“ DEAR BRETHREN,

“ We have taken into our serious consideration the purport of your application; the nature and design of ‘the United Societies’ formed by Mr. Wesley; and also the obligations of the trust reposed in us; and are well satisfied, we shall act uprightly in preserving the House on the broad and disinterested principles of its founder. And, as your wishes are subversive of those principles, we cannot, we dare not, comply with them.

“ We are, dear brethren,

“ Yours affectionately,

“ JOHN STOKOE, JOHN REED,

“ JOHN GREENE, JOSHUA WARDELL,

“ ROBERT GREY.

“ To Mr. Yewdall and Mr. Bogie, and the other subscribing brethren.”

The Rubicon was now passed. On the Sabbath following, part of the Orphan-House Society and congregation assembled for worship in Church-hours, in a place which had formerly been used as a billiard-room in Nunsgate; but which, in anticipation of the trustees’ refusal, had been temporarily taken for religious

* The following signatures were attached to the document:— Zechariah Yewdall, James Bogie, Robert Frost, John Aym斯ley, Jacob Atkinson, Robert Wilson, John Fordy, Jonathan Brumwell, Alexander Smith, Roger Robson, William Slater, William Potter, George Wilkinson, Robert Dixon.

uses. Subsequently, the Cordwainers' Hall, in the High Bridge, was rented for the same purpose, and formally opened by Messrs. Yewdall and Bogie on Sunday, the 8th of October. The Church-party deeming this a step altogether unauthorized, the ministers of the Newcastle District were convened to consider and adjudicate the case. These, rightly judging that some respect was due to the conscientious convictions of the parties concerned, not only exculpated the preachers, but gave their sanction to the course pursued.

Whether owing to the multiplication of religious services, or to causes less satisfactory, the early preaching at the Orphan-House had for some time been greatly neglected; so much so, that it was at length thought well to give up the service altogether. *Daily* preaching at the early hour of five could not, perhaps, be expected to secure in perpetuity a large attendance. The determination of the trustees, "that all things should go on in the same manner as in Mr. Wesley's lifetime," was at this juncture laudably carried out. "Tuesday, November 14th, 1797," they record, "The stewards gave orders to the door-keeper to open the House no more for five-o'clock service; (which hath been of a long time rarely attended by the preachers;) but, on application to Mr. Yewdall by the trustees, it was agreed that they should have keys, and open the House as usual. Accordingly, the trustees procured keys, and conducted the morning service." In this department of supposed duty, Mr. Grey was most attentive; being stately present for several years at that early hour, although scarcely more than one or two others were ever found associated with him: when, in lieu of an oral discourse, one of Mr. Wesley's sermons was usually read, and the service concluded with prayer.

For some years the sanctuary-requirements of the Wesleyans appear to have been met by the supplementary services held in the Cordwainers' Hall. Early in the year

1802,* a step yet further in advance was taken, by the rental and occupation of the Ebenezer chapel, situate on the brow of the hill overlooking Sandgate; in which, till the erection of the New-Road chapel, religious service was regularly held every Sabbath, morning and afternoon. The place had previously been occupied by Mr. Knipes, a Presbyterian minister.

To meet the wants of the Society in the western division of the town, (all worship in Church-hours being still prohibited by the Orphan-House trustees,) a chapel in Westgate-street, previously occupied as a Roman Catholic place of worship, was, in the year 1808, taken on lease for the preaching and other services of Wesleyan Methodism. Upwards of £800 were spent in necessary alterations and repairs. Its occupancy by the Methodists was, however, of short duration. On the decease of Mr. Grey, (who departed this life on the 1st of December, 1811,) followed by the resignation of Mr. Wardell, one of his associates in the trusteeship of the Orphan-House, all objectionable restrictions on the worship there ceased. The Westgate-street Society and congregation at once resumed their places in the "old House," cheerfully re-uniting with those from whom, on conscientious grounds, they had for a season been dissociated. For some years a Sunday-school was held in the now forsaken chapel. The place was afterwards let to various sectaries; till, under the superintendence of the Rev. Valentine Ward, in 1831, it was re-opened for the services of Methodism, and continued to be thus appropriated till the erection of the chapel in Blenheim-street in the year 1838. The chapel in Westgate-street was at that period disposed of to a congregation of Baptists; and, under the designation of "New Zion chapel," it continues to this day.

The vacancies occasioned by death or otherwise in the

* See Plan of the Newcastle Circuit, Appendix E.

Orphan-House Deed were provisionally filled up, by the *nomination* of the following persons to act as trustees, in conjunction with Messrs. William Smith and John Greene; namely, George Shadforth, William Smith Batson, Charles Newby Wawn, John Gee, Thomas Prior Flanders. A new era in the history of this ancient House was by this procedure introduced; inasmuch as the parties now associated with Mr. Smith in its trusteeship, though far from being inimical to "the Church as by law established," did yet regard the Methodist Societies as possessing all the characteristics of Christian churches, and hence as entitled, in association with their own ministers, to every church ordinance and privilege. From some unexplained cause, their legal investiture as trustees did not take place till nearly two years after; when, as though mistakes in the renewal of the Orphan-House Deed were never to be avoided, the number of trustees was unduly increased from seven to eleven; thus rendering exceedingly doubtful the validity of the Indenture, as a Deed of Trust. In the step thus taken, it was deemed prudent to secure the concurrence of the ministers and office-bearers of the Orphan-House Society: hence the following "Declaration of Agreement and Assent," which is here inserted as a rarity:—

"We, whose names are hereto subscribed,—
being the preachers who at present exercise the office of
preachers or expounders of God's holy word, in the
Orphan-House, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, under and
by virtue of the nomination and appointment of the
yearly Conference of Methodists; and the stewards and
leaders of the Society of Methodists in Newcastle-upon-
Tyne, aforesaid,—being convened and met together at
a public meeting held this day in the said Orphan-
House, do hereby signify our approbation of a certain
Deed or Indenture laid before us, and intended to be

made between William Smith, John Greene, and Joshua Wardell, of the first part; Michael Longridge, of the second part; and William Smith, William Smith Batson, Charles Newby Wawn, John Gee, Thomas Featherston, John Ward the younger, Elijah Galloway, John Beckington, Robert Spoor, Joseph Hedley, and George Airey, of the third part. And we also hereby request the said William Smith, John Greene, and Joshua Wardell, to execute the said Deed, for the purpose of vesting the said Orphan-House and premises in the said William Smith, together with the said parties of the third part, upon the several trusts therein mentioned:—

“As witness our hands, this 14th day of October, 1813.

“ISAAC TURTON,	JOSEPH ELLIOTT,
“HENRY TAFT, M.D.,	JOHN SIMPSON,
“JOHN TODD,	CHRISTOPHER RUTHERFORD,
“JONATHAN VICKERS,	WILLIAM HAGGERSTON,
“WALTER STONE,	ANDREW MARSHALL,
“JOHN LOWTHER,	JOHN WALTON,
“WILLIAM SCOTT,	ROGER ROBSON,
“JOHN FORDY,	EDWARD WALKER,
“JOSEPH APPLEGARTH.”	

The Deed in execution of this official request bears date October 21st, 1813; but, as if designed to place the invalidity of the Indenture beyond dispute, several clauses are added to those contained in the original Deed of 1745. All these errors and misapprehensions were, however, by a somewhat circuitous route, remedied in the last-executed Trust-Deed of the Orphan-House, bearing date July 25th, 1840. The parties there named as trustees are, John Beckington, George Airey, George Bargate, John Nichol, David Flintoff, Thomas Stanley, and Ralph Hodgson.

A chapter of misapprehension and blunder might easily be recorded, in reference to the Deed of the Orphan-House, and its frequent renewal. It would, indeed, be matter of congratulation, if this were the only exception to the general correctness of Methodist Deeds. Many are the evils which have occasionally been felt. "To obviate the inconvenience, expense, and insecurity to which trustees of chapels, and the Connexion at large, have in many instances been exposed," a Model-Deed* was, in the year 1832, after much consultation and inquiry, drawn up by the authority of the Conference; in which, well nigh everything that can be desired as to the proper settlement of Wesleyan chapels, and the financial safety of the trustees, is secured. In accordance with the provisions of this "Model-Deed," the chapels erected since its date have generally been settled.

In the year 1812, the overflowing congregation at the Orphan-House rendering necessary increased accommodation, arrangements were made for the erection of a new and spacious chapel in the eastern section of the town; thus superseding the continued occupancy of the Ebenezer chapel, still rented by the Wesleyans. Its cost (partly from the difficulty experienced in securing a safe foundation) was great. On the 10th of October, 1813, it was opened for public worship, by the Rev. Messrs. Lessey, Atherton, and Burdsall, who severally occupied the pulpit, morning, afternoon, and evening. So unexpectedly great was the concourse of persons on the occasion, that it was found requisite to open the Ebenezer chapel for worship at the same hours; whilst those whom the two chapels could not accommodate were addressed by Mr. Turton in the open air. For some time, great financial difficulty was experienced by the trustees. From

* For an abstract of the provisions of this important Deed, see Appendix F.

the day of its opening,* a heavy debt rested upon the building; which, in consequence of an accumulating deficiency of income, reached, in 1833, the alarming sum of £6,200. At this period, the seat-rents of the chapel barely realized £80 per annum! Strenuous efforts were put forth, especially on occasion of making the New-Road chapel the head of the Newcastle East Circuit, in order to lessen this fearful liability. In addition to £1,640, for which the Brunswick-place trustees became responsible, and £1,400 granted by the Wesleyan Loan-Committee, upwards of £1,360 were raised by subscriptions and collections; thus lessening the debt by £4,400. In after years, under the superintendence of the Rev. Henry Davies, with whom a scheme of relief originated, the New-Road chapel debt (which had again accumulated) was lessened by a further sum of nearly £1,830. At the same time the debt for which the Blenheim-street trustees were liable was reduced by £620; whilst, in painting and repairing the several town-chapels, a further sum of £1,500 was spent.

The year 1813 was rendered memorable in the history of Methodism by the inauguration of Societies in the several Districts of the Connexion, in order to secure by

* The Deed bears date August 28th, 1812, and is signed by the following persons as trustees:—John Beckington, Ouseburn, merchant; William Potter, Swalwell, brewer; John Gray, Newcastle, iron-merchant; Thomas Featherston, Newcastle, grocer; Thomas Wailes, Westgate, gentleman; Thomas Rutherford, Ballast-hills, agent; Robert Spoor, Newcastle, glass-maker; Ralph Hodgson, Newcastle, grocer; Andrew Marshall, Newcastle, cordwainer; John Reay, Carville, agent; Jacob Stanley, Newcastle, china-dealer; John Coulson, Newcastle, agent; John Gee, Newcastle, agent.

Two subsequent renewals of the Deed have taken place; the former bearing date July 15th, 1824; the latter, February 10th, 1847, when the following were appointed as trustees:—Thomas Stanley, Ralph Wilson, Joseph Hopper, John Benson, Robert Bell, William Anderson, Thomas Brown, George Green, Abraham C. Angus, Charles Pearson, Thomas Simpson, John Ward, and Matthew M. Youll.

quarterly, monthly, or weekly contributions, or otherwise, increased means for the extension of Christ's kingdom on the earth. The first meeting of the kind was held in Leeds, on the 6th of October, 1813, when sixteen resolutions were passed, and able addresses were delivered by the Rev. Messrs. Morley, Bunting, Buckley, Watson, and others. A similar meeting, for the formation of a Methodist Missionary Society for the Newcastle District, was held in the New-Road chapel, on the 14th of April, 1814. Mr. John Ward, jun., of Durham, who presided, delivered a luminous and most appropriate address, concluding with the remark, that "one other event which had filled the land with unbounded joy was to be ranked among the circumstances propitious to the object of the meeting; he meant the prospect of a general peace. This had rendered the day an auspicious one; and he thought it called on all to render thanks to the Prince of Peace, and to manifest the sincerity of their gratitude by bringing Him an acceptable offering." The Rev. Messrs. Bunting, Watson, Lessey, Atherton, and George Smith, were speakers on the occasion, together with Messrs. William Smith, Charles N. Wawn, M. Longridge, jun., A. H. Matthewson, W. Oxley, and others. The whole of the addresses were worthy of the men, and of the occasion.* Mr. Bunting's speech was eminently practical; dwelling forcibly on the fact, "that whilst, by the efforts of the **FEW**, particular spots of our barren earth had been rendered spiritually fruitful, it was only by the **concentrated zeal** and **stated contributions** of the **MANY** that pecuniary means could be provided for the evangelization of the world." Mr. Watson urged, with charac-

* The first Methodist Missionary meeting held in the north of England. In 1812, the Missionary contributions of the Newcastle Circuit were £23. 11s. 4d.; in 1861, the subscriptions and collections amounted to £508. 6s. 5d.—inclusive of £92, as the proceeds of Juvenile Associations and Christmas Offerings.

teristic eloquence, that British Christians would be highly criminal, if, whilst themselves the fruit of Missionary effort, they neglected the opportunities then opening by a series of singular providences for the Christianizing of the heathen. "Never," he observed, "was the propriety of Missionary exertions once questioned in the ancient church: the subject, too, remained unquestioned even through ages of decline and corruption. The feeling of compassion to the heathen still survived, and was never chilled, till infidelity under the name of Christianity chilled it. Whoever was indifferent to Missions, was indifferent to Christianity; for by Missions only could it spread; and he that could resign the greater part of the human race to the ignorance and vices of heathenism, without an effort to rescue them, was such a Christian as the church had never in any age acknowledged." The meeting, throughout, was characterized by the "feast of reason," and the "flow" of Missionary "soul."

The Orphan-House still continuing—notwithstanding the erection of the New-Road chapel—too small to accommodate the numbers who were wishful to attend, the erection of a larger chapel in its stead was forced upon the attention of the trustees and the congregation worshipping there. "Such, however, were the attachments of the senior members of the Society to the House in which they had waited upon God from their youth, and had often heard the word of God from the lips of the venerable men who were the first instruments of the great revival of religion in these lands, that it was no easy task to persuade them to embark in an undertaking which would issue in their removal from a place with which were associated so many grateful recollections. At length, however, a conviction of duty operated on their conscientious minds, and they gave to the proposal for erecting a new chapel their hearty support." Land was purchased in the immediate neighbourhood of the Orphan-

House. The chapel erected a few years previously in Waltham-street, Hull, was, with some slight alteration of the plan, adopted as a model; and on the 5th of May, 1820, the corner-stone of the new erection was laid by the then superintendent of the Circuit, the Rev. Edmund Grindrod. Under the skilful oversight of Mr. George Spoor, by whom the "working-plans" were drawn, the building was expeditiously yet firmly reared, and was finished in a style "highly creditable to the taste, the judgment, and the piety of the trustees." The chapel, the dimensions of which are eighty-one feet by sixty-four, will accommodate upwards of fifteen hundred persons. The "Newcastle Courant," of the 3d of March, 1821, thus narrates the circumstances attendant on its opening:—

"The Methodist chapel in Brunswick-place, Northumberland-street, in this town, was opened for Divine worship on Friday, the 23d, and Sunday, the 25th ult.; when sermons were preached by the Rev. Messrs. Robert Newton, William Atherton, and Robert Wood, and collections made amounting in all to £220. 4s.; since increased, by donations, to £251. 17s. 6d. The chapel was crowded to excess, by persons of every rank and condition, and of the various religious communities; who all seemed liberally to patronize the undertaking by their countenance and contributions. The edifice, in point of commodiousness, taste, and capacity, is not exceeded by any place of worship in the north of England; and, on the occasion of this solemnity, presented a scene of deep and lively interest to the religious public of this town and neighbourhood, unequalled for a long series of years."

The cost of the chapel, together with the ministers' houses erected at the same period in Brunswick-place, was £6,726. The subscriptions guaranteed before the laying of the foundation-stone amounted to £1,323; in which was included a donation of £50, from his Grace

the Duke of Northumberland, accompanied by the following letter from Sir D. W. Smith, baronet,—the duke's chief commissioner:—

“ Commissioners'-place, Alnwick Castle,
29th Feb., 1820.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ THE Duke of Northumberland has received, and delivered to me, your application to his Grace, of the 21st inst.: in answer to which, I beg to inform you, that, from the numerous applications he has had to assist the building of Dissenting chapels of various denominations, he has been obliged to decline giving aid to most of them; but the loyalty which has lately been displayed by the Wesleyan Methodists of Newcastle, in discountenancing opinions which lead to the subverting of all religion whatever, induces the duke to make them an exception; and I therefore enclose £50, by his Grace's order, which I will thank you to acknowledge the receipt of.

“ I am, gentlemen,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ W. D. SMITH.

“ The Wesleyan Methodists,

“ Newcastle.”

The success of this important undertaking fully justified the steps taken by the trustees.* The chapel was quickly

* The chapel-premises, the Deed of which bears date July 15th, 1824, were conveyed to the following persons as trustees:—Elijah Galloway, searcher in Customs; Robert Spoor, grocer; John Beckington, miller; George Airey, gentleman; Thomas Wailes, esquire; John Reay, gentleman; Andrew Marshall, cordwainer; David Flintoff, currier; Robert Wilson, smith; George Bargate, woollen draper; Jonathan Vickers, grocer; Thomas Brunting, brass-founder; John Vickers, grocer; John Nichol, confectioner; John Daglish, surgeon; John Jobson, brass-founder; Joseph Hedley, gentleman; Ralph Hodgson, grocer; Thomas Stanley, draper; Thomas Featherstone, grocer. The Deed of Conveyance to an intermediate party was dated February 13th, 1821.

filled with serious and intelligent hearers: a salutary impetus was also given to every department of Methodistic effort, not only in Newcastle, but throughout the Circuit.

The Orphan-House, being no longer used as a place of religious worship, was, till taken down in 1856, appropriated chiefly for scholastic purposes. The Brunswick-place Sunday-school was regularly held there on the Lord's day; on the days intervening, the chapel-portion of the premises was tenanted by "the Newcastle Infant-School Society;" the apartments previously occupied by the preachers, together with the band and class rooms, being "let out" in tenements. The last ministerial occupant of the Orphan-House was the late Rev. John Rigg, who for forty-nine years "pursued a diligent and faithful course of service; growing in the esteem of his brethren, and sustaining posts of high responsibility, which sometimes required an extraordinary degree of wisdom, firmness, and forbearance."

It is a coincidence worthy of note, that, on the day when the sanctuary-occupation of the Orphan-House ceased, the remains of Ann Nichol, one of the earliest worshippers and members there, were committed to the tomb. This good woman, who reached the advanced age of ninety-six, is said to have been a hearer of the Wesleys in the Lisle-street room,—the first spot occupied for Methodist worship in the town of Newcastle. Having at that period no money at her command, she sold a piece of cloth in her possession, and appropriated the proceeds as her contribution toward the erection of the Orphan-House of Wesley.

The "quaint old House," thus superseded,—after having worthily answered the purposes of its erection,—can no longer be regarded as our historic centre. Ere, however, we proceed to the ultimate appropriation of its site, certain matters of Methodistic interest claim, at least, a passing notice.

At the Conference of 1833, in hope that by increased ministerial agency, and the more efficient pastoral oversight of the several Societies, greater success in the respective departments of effort would be secured, a division of the Newcastle Circuit was effected; the Brunswick-place chapel, with the western section of the town and Circuit, being designated "Newcastle West;" whilst to the "Newcastle East" Circuit were assigned the New-Road chapel, with Carville, St. Anthony, Walker, and other places situate in an easterly direction. For the space of ten years, this arrangement held good; when, as the objects originally contemplated were only partially realized, the Circuits were again combined.

In the Midsummer of 1836, an attempt was made, by the establishment of "The Wesleyan Sunday-School Society for the Newcastle District," to give increased efficiency to the scholastic agencies of Methodism, not only in Newcastle, but in the Circuits adjacent. For some years a degree of success attended the effort; yet, partly from the want of Connexional sanction and authority, and partly from want of funds, the Society became defunct. The objects of the association were stated to be,—

"1. To promote the establishment of Sunday-schools in connexion with the Wesleyan Societies throughout the District.

"2. To encourage and assist Wesleyan schools by periodical visitation and inspection, and by the suggestion of improvements in management and discipline.

"3. To supply the schools in connexion with the Society with books and other requisites on the lowest terms; and to make grants of books, or afford other assistance, to such schools as may appear to be in circumstances rendering such aid necessary."

Whether District-Societies, such as above described,

could be established, with any prospect of permanent efficiency and success, is, perhaps, doubtful. Circuit-associations of the kind (as in several instances already tried) might certainly be formed; and, if judiciously sustained, would be productive of extensive good; especially amongst the rural or the neglected portions of the community.

To meet the wants of a new and daily-increasing population in the western division of the town, steps were taken toward the erection of a neat and commodious chapel in Blenheim-street, one of the new lines of houses then in progress. The foundation-stone was laid by William Nesham, Esq., a highly-respected office-bearer of the Wesleyan Society, on the 4th of September, 1837. In addition to £1,430 raised by subscription, the large sum of £301 was collected in Brunswick-place chapel, after a sermon preached in the month of August, 1838, by the Rev. Dr. Bunting. The chapel, which will seat nearly eight hundred persons, was opened for public worship on Friday, the 26th of October, 1838; on which occasion, sermons were preached by the Revs. Robert Newton and Theophilus Lessey. On the two following Sabbaths the opening services were continued; when the pulpit was successively occupied by the Rev. Messrs. Lessey, Galland, Anderson, and M'Donald. The collections amounted to upwards of £600. The cost of the chapel, with the spacious school-room underneath, was £3,800.

In the unprecedented Centenary movement the Wesleyans of Newcastle gladly took their part. One of the adjourned divisional meetings of the General Committee, as agreed upon at the memorable gathering in Manchester, early in November, 1838, was convened, "for all the northern Districts and Circuits," in the Brunswick-place chapel, Newcastle, on Friday, the 21st of December, 1838. The chapel was well filled, morning and evening, by a deeply-interested auditory; the galleries being ex-

clusively occupied by ladies. A large number of ministers, and influential laymen, from various Circuits in the counties of Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, were present. The Rev. Thomas Jackson, the honoured President of the Conference, occupied the chair; and, by his genial spirit, and his stirring reminiscences of former days, excited a glow of hallowed and grateful joy in every breast. The Revs. Dr. Bunting, Robert Newton, George Marsden, Francis A. West, with Messrs. James Wood, Farmer, Heald, Chappell, and others, attended as a deputation from the General Committee. Highly interesting and appropriate addresses were given by the several speakers; and, at the close of the proceedings, the contributions from "the northern Centenary district" were announced as having reached the cheering sum of £8,795.

Not less than £235,000 were eventually realized as the Centenary tribute of the Wesleyan Societies and congregations at home and abroad. Of this sum, £2,039. 5s. 7d. were the grateful offerings of the members and friends of Methodism in the Newcastle West and East Circuits. The Wesleyan Centenary-Hall and Mission-House, situate in Bishopsgate-street, London, and the Theological colleges, or "Institution"-houses, at Richmond and Didsbury, were the monumental erections consequent upon this noble effort. Large sums were also appropriated towards the relief of distressed chapels in Great Britain and Ireland, as well as in aid of the Fund for disabled ministers and for ministers' widows. The sum of £1,000 was presented to the British and Foreign Bible Society, in approval of its object, and "in acknowledgment of numerous and valuable assistances rendered by it during many past years to the Wesleyan Missions in various parts of the world."

In compliance with the earnest desire of the Societies in Newcastle, and in the Circuits immediately adjacent,

the Wesleyan Conference held its ninety-seventh session in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Its sittings commenced in the Brunswick-place chapel, on Wednesday, the 29th of July, 1840; arrangements having been made for the hospitable entertainment of four hundred ministers in the Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, and North and South Shields Circuits. In consequence of the illness of the president, the Rev. Theophilus Lessey, the chair of the preparatory committees was occupied by the Rev. Thomas Jackson, the venerable ex-president; who also, at the request of the Conference, conducted its proceedings till the appointment of the Rev. Robert Newton, as Mr. Lessey's successor. Fifty-four young preachers, having passed the usual probation, were, in the presence of a vast concourse of persons, set apart by the imposition of hands and prayer, for the work and office of the Christian ministry. The number in Society, as returned to the Conference, presented a gratifying increase, in Great Britain and Ireland, of 16,774 members, and, on the foreign stations, of 5,777.

The total number of members in the Wesleyan-Methodist Society throughout the world was reported as follows:—

In Great Britain and Ireland	350,925
On the Foreign Missionary stations	<u>78,504</u>
In connexion with the British Conference.....	428,729
Under the care of the American Conferences, as reported in 1838	692,341
Connected with the Wesleyan-Methodist Church in Upper Canada	<u>16,354</u>
Throughout the world	<u>1,137,424*</u>

The total number of Wesleyan ministers in the several

* The numbers reported in 1862 (exclusive of the United States' returns) place before us in connexion with the British and affiliated Conferences,—

Ministers	2,877
Members in Society	519,969
On trial for membership	43,692

quarters of the globe, including those on ministerial probation, and also those who, having ceased from Circuit-duties, were regarded as supernumerary ministers, was given as under,—

In Great Britain and Ireland	1,237
On Foreign Missionary stations	345
In the Canadian Connexion	127
In the United States	3,322
	<hr/>
	5,031

Two interesting incidents, beyond the usual routine of its affairs, were witnessed at this northern Conference:— One, the presence there of two Ashanti princes, in company with their travelling tutor, the Rev. Thomas Pyne; who, on being introduced to the Conference, were suitably addressed by the president: the other, the presentation to the Conference, by H. P. Parker, Esq., of his celebrated Centenary picture, representing the escape of Wesley from the fire at his father's house in Epworth. The gift of this splendid work of art was communicated in the following letter:—

“ To the President of the Wesleyan Conference
assembled in Newcastle-upon-Tyne:
“ August 4th, 1840.

“ REVEREND AND HONOURED SIR,

“ AGREEABLY to my first intention, I beg leave to present to the Conference the original picture painted by me, representing the rescue of the founder of Methodism from the fire which took place in the parsonage-house at Epworth, Lincolnshire, in 1709,—to be henceforth their property, and to be deposited in the Centenary-Hall, London, or where, in their wisdom, they shall consider it most suitable to be preserved as a memorial of the event it is intended to commemorate. And, to be able to present it in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at the first Wesleyan Conference convened in it, is to me the more gratifying,

it being the town in which the venerable Wesley established the third Society in the kingdom,—a town in which one of the first Methodist chapels was built, and one of the most favoured resorts of Mr. Wesley,—a town in which part of his family resided, (the late Mrs. William Smith,) and where myself and family have long dwelt, and for many years been in connexion with the Wesleyans as hearers or members ; and in which the work was suggested and executed.

“ Of its merits it does not become me to speak. Such as it is, I present it as a free-will offering to the Wesleyan Centenary ;

“ And am, most respectfully,
“ Your humble and obedient servant,
“ H. P. PARKER.”

The acceptance of this munificent and acceptable present was acknowledged in the following terms :—

“ Newcastle-upon-Tyne, August 4th, 1840.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ WE have great pleasure in transmitting to you the following Resolution, which has been most cordially and unanimously adopted :—

“ ‘ That the thanks of the Conference be presented to H. P. Parker, Esq., of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for the highly-valuable donation he has made to the Centenary Fund, in presenting for the use of the Conference, in the Centenary-Hall, his celebrated historical painting of the rescue of the late Rev. John Wesley, our venerated founder, from the flames which consumed the parsonage-house at Epworth, in 1709 ; and that the generous gift of Mr. Parker is hereby gratefully accepted by the Conference.’

“ The Conference accept, with the same pleasure you feel in presenting, this splendid fruit of your genius and industry. Connected with the Centenary-Hall, in which it is intended to be placed, they hope it will tend to

preserve the remembrance of the 'venerable Wesley,' whose providential deliverance it commemorates, and thereby extend the system of doctrine and discipline with which his name is identified, and which has so direct and powerful a bearing upon the temporal and eternal happiness of mankind. Their prayer, dear sir, on behalf of yourself and family is, that, having been associated with the founder of Methodism in so many ways, you may also share with him in that 'gift of God' which 'is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

"Signed, on behalf and by order of the Conference,

"ROBERT NEWTON, *President,*

"JOHN HANNAH, *Secretary.*

"To H. P. Parker, Esq."

The proceedings of the Conference terminated on Friday, the 14th of August. During its sittings, the following justly-merited tribute to the attentions paid by the northern Societies to their ministerial guests appeared in one of the public prints:—"A spirit of the greatest kindness has been manifested; and the cheerful readiness with which the friends have come forward to entertain the 'messengers of the churches,' is a decisive proof that Wesleyan Methodism and its ministers stand high in the estimation of the Societies in this vicinity. Nothing has been left undone which appeared to be requisite for the personal comfort of the ministers, or the convenient transaction of business. It is, certainly, an interesting coincidence, that the first Conference of the second Centenary should have been convened, for the first time, in a place which, next to London and Bristol, was among the very first to receive and to profit by the evangelical labours of the founders of Methodism."

The sittings of the Conference were subsequently held in Newcastle, in the years 1851 and 1862.

Over one unhappy period in the history of Methodism

in Newcastle, charity would gladly draw the veil. The storm of unholy agitation, in its progress through the land, rendered desolate for a season many northern "fields" which, in bygone days, God had "delighted to bless." The demon of discord seemed let loose; whilst, amid the strife of tongues, and unfounded, bitter declamation, "the wisdom from above," which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated," seemed banished from her throne. Characters, till then without a stain, were calumniously assailed. The peace of families, in many instances, was destroyed; the "lame" were "turned out of the way;" and many simple-minded, pious souls, seduced from the church and people of their former choice, were lured into the paths of worldliness and sin. "It is impossible," saith Christ, "but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." Viewed in the light of this declaration, a fearful responsibility is incurred by those who causelessly disturb the peace of Zion. "The spiritual efficacy of Methodism," Dr. Smith justly observes, when reviewing the Connexional troubles of 1849 and subsequent years, "has not been maintained by the sacrifice of its principles, or the revolution of its system. Neither have these been blindly upheld by either ministers or people. The system denounced as an instrument of tyranny,—the laws declared to be 'steeped in apostasy and unbelief,'—have been carefully and candidly examined by hundreds of men, ministers and laymen, as honest and upright, as intelligent and religious, as any of their censors; and the result is, that, while some minor modifications of discipline and changes of law have been introduced, all the essential principles of the Body have been retained and confirmed by the hearty and unanimous approval of the present race of

Wesleyans, who, with unfeigned gratitude to God for the spiritual privileges and religious economy which their fathers, under the providence of God, have handed down to them, will transmit them unimpaired to their children, as the most scriptural heritage of spiritual blessing the world has seen.”*

* Smith's History of Wesleyan Methodism, vol. iii., pp. 527, 528.

CHAPTER IX.

1854—1857.

Depressed state of affairs in the Newcastle Circuit—Scheme of relief sanctioned by the Orphan-House trustees—First day-school efforts referred to—Appointment of provisional committee—Grant from Wesleyan Chapel-committee—Letter from Charity Commissioners reporting complaint of Orphan-House misappropriation—Answer of trustees' treasurer—School and chapel scheme submitted to the Charity Commissioners—Their sanction withheld—The Orphan-House declared a charity *per se*—Embarrassing position of the trustees—Their case further stated to the Commissioners—Powers of the Board defined—Proposal of trustees to re-purchase the Orphan-House property—Notice and authorization of sale—Proceeds of sale transferred to the official trustees of Charitable Funds—Section of the Orphan-House land vested in trustees for the erection of Wesleyan day-schools—Names of trustees—Renewal of the Brunswick-place and Blenheim-street chapel Deeds.

AT the Conference of 1854, the ministerial appointment for the Newcastle Circuit was,—“William W. Stamp, William R. Williams, Luke Tyerman; Francis Neale, Supernumerary.”

The numbers in Society throughout the Circuit had been reduced, during the ten preceding years, from 1,885 to 777: the congregations, generally, had suffered in the same proportion. The state of the Brunswick-place trust was far from satisfactory: a debt of upwards of £5,000 rested on the premises; whilst the trustees were so far reduced in number, as to render necessary an application to the court of Chancery, in order to effect the legal transfer of the trust-estate. From the dilapidated condition of the Orphan-House property, the revenue arising thence was becoming more and more

precarious. The income of the Circuit also, notwithstanding the small stipends then paid to its ministers, failed to meet the ordinary expenditure by nearly £100 per annum. Hence, in every department of Newcastle Methodism, a disheartening influence was felt. Some, indeed, seriously entertained the idea of selling one of the town-chapels, and endeavouring by the labours of *two* ministers, more adequately provided for, to meet the necessities of the northern metropolis, and of the numerous villages adjacent.

The following document, drawn up in legal form, and signed by the surviving trustees of the Orphan-House estate, presents in detail the plan devised to meet the exigencies of the case; or, at least, to open the way for more vigorous and successful effort:—

“TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME: We, JOHN BECKINGTON, of the town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, miller; GEORGE BARGATE, of the same place, tanner; JOHN NICHOL, of the same place, confectioner; and RALPH HODGSON, also of the same place, agent; send greeting.

“WHEREAS we are the surviving trustees of the Orphan-House and premises, situate in Northumberland-street, in the parish of St. Andrew, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid, the trusts of which were, on its erection by the late Reverend John Wesley, created by him, in and by a certain Indenture of release, bearing date the fifth day of March, one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, and which relate not only to the preaching and expounding of God’s holy word, but also to the instruction of forty poor children: AND WHEREAS the latter of the said trusts was not at all carried out in the lifetime of the said John Wesley, and since his death has only been partially carried out: AND WHEREAS we have this day, in meeting duly convened, had propounded to us by the

Reverend William Wood Stamp, the superintendent for the time being of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Circuit, in which the said Orphan-House and premises are situate, a scheme the object of which is to carry out more efficiently than hitherto the trusts of the said Indenture, and the designs of the said John Wesley; and of which the following are the chief propositions; viz., FIRST,—to erect on the site of the present Orphan-House a building which shall serve the purposes of mixed and infants' day-schools, and also a girls' industrial-school; giving accommodation to about four hundred children: SECOND,—as the Brunswick-place Wesleyan-Methodist chapel was, in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, or thereabouts, in consequence of the want of sufficient accommodation in the said Orphan-House, built in lieu of the same, with the consent and by the united efforts of the trustees for the time being thereof, and the congregation worshipping there, and was for some time designated 'The New Orphan-House,'—to transfer by Deed absolutely, to the trustees of the said chapel, the frontage of the said Orphan-House property, to the depth of eleven yards or thereabouts from the street-front backwards, and the rental arising therefrom, to be appropriated to the trust-funds of the said chapel; a right of way, eighteen feet wide or thereabouts, across the said frontage to the intended school being for ever reserved to the trustees thereof: THIRD,—to reduce considerably the debt now resting on the said Brunswick-place chapel, and for that purpose to solicit from the Wesleyan Chapel-Relief Committee a grant of five hundred pounds, and a loan of one thousand pounds, to be re-paid without interest by the said chapel-trustees in ten years, by an annual instalment of one hundred pounds: Now know ye, that we, having duly considered the said scheme, and being desirous of promoting as much as in us lies the trusts and designs aforesaid, do hereby assent to and

authorize, as far as we lawfully can, the disposal and transfer of the said Orphan-House and premises for the purposes aforesaid; and do also empower the said William Wood Stamp, for us, in our name, and on our behalf, to make such application to the Commissioners acting under the recent Act passed for the better administration of Charitable Trusts, or to any other competent tribunal, and to take such other steps, and to do such other acts and deeds, as may be necessary for effectually carrying out the scheme and purposes aforesaid.

“As witness our hands this twenty-second day of February, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five.

“JOHN BECKINGTON,
“GEORGE BARGATE,
“JOHN NICHOL,
“RALPH HODGSON.

“Witness, RALPH WILSON.”

In the scheme thus brought before the Orphan-House trustees, which at once secured their cordial sanction, the establishment of day-schools on a large and influential scale was necessarily prominent. The instruction of the rising generation by means of *day* as well as Sabbath schools had for many years occupied the attention of the Wesleyan community in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Various attempts,* involving no trifling effort and expense, were at

* At a public meeting held in Brunswick-place chapel, on the evening of Friday, April 26th, 1822,—the Rev. David M'Nicol occupying the chair,—the establishment of a girls' day-school in the Carpenter's Tower was resolved upon. The school was opened on the 13th of the month following, and in the course of a few weeks had on its roll the names of one hundred and sixty children; being the first school of the kind held in the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. After the erection of the Blenheim-street chapel in 1838, a day as well as a Sabbath school for boys and girls was commenced in the large room underneath the chapel, and for a season was well attended.

Several supplementary Sabbath-schools, also, had been established in

different periods made: yet although these were to a certain extent successful, the difficulty of securing a *succession* of duly-trained teachers led, eventually, to the relinquishment, for a season, of such educational project. The establishment of the Wealeyan Normal Institution at Westminster, (an Institution most efficiently conducted, where teachers of undoubted piety receive all requisite instruction and training,) together with the prompt concurrence of the Orphan-House trustees in the plan proposed, was felt by the Wesleyans in Newcastle as a loud and imperative call for them to take their proper position in this department of Christian and philanthropic effort. And nobly they responded.

The Provisional Committee, recently appointed,* held

different sections of the town. Soon after the occupation of the Cordwainers' Hall for purposes of worship, a Sunday-school was held in Nuns-gate, in the billiard-room of the Scotch-Arms' inn: the cock-pit in Westgate was also in after years thus employed; till, on the establishment of similar schools in the neighbourhood in connexion with other sections of the church of Christ, this was discontinued.

In the year 1814 a Sabbath-school was established in Sandgate,—still the lowest and most neglected portion of the town; two rooms being rented for that purpose in the Swirle. The school here formed was, in 1817, removed to the Carpenter's Tower; where, on the formation of the Newcastle East Circuit, nearly five hundred children were found in weekly attendance.

* At a meeting of friends convened by the superintendent of the Circuit, February 10th, 1855, at the house of John B. Falconar, Esq., Forres-villa, when £600 were promptly subscribed in furtherance of the united school and chapel effort, the following gentlemen were appointed to act as a Provisional Committee to carry out in its integrity the proposed plan:—

The superintendent of the Circuit;

John B. Falconar, senior, *Treasurer*;

John B. Falconar, junior, } *Secretaries*;

William H. Stephenson, }

with Messrs. Bargate, Ralph Wilson, Stephenson, of Throckley, and E. M. Bainbridge;—under whose judicious movements, with much anxious thought and toil, the whole scheme was eventually brought to a successful issue.

its first sitting on the 15th of March, 1855, when the superintendent reported as the result of his recent interview with the Chapel Committee in Manchester, that, in consideration of the peculiarity and urgency of the case, they had voted, in reference to that part of the scheme which embraced the relief of the Brunswick-place chapel trust, a grant of £500, to meet a similar sum to be raised by the trustees and their friends; and had further granted a loan of £1,000, without interest, to be repaid by an annual instalment of £100, on condition that from the shops proposed to be erected on the frontage of the Orphan-House estate, and transferred to the Brunswick-place trustees, an equivalent rental should in perpetuity be secured; and, further, on condition that the chapel-property in Brunswick-place, by a renewal of its Deed, be placed in the hands of new and competent trustees.

Thus far encouraged, instructions were given by the Provisional Committee to Messrs. Fenwicks and Falconar, in conjunction with T. Percival Bunting, Esq., of Manchester, to draw up a statement of the whole case, to be submitted to the Charity Commissioners for their approval and sanction. Whilst this was in progress, the treasurer of the Orphan-House trustees, Mr. Ralph Wilson, was somewhat surprised by the receipt of the following communication from the Secretary of the Charity Commission:—

“ Charity Commission,
“ 8, York-street, St. James’s-square,
“ 26th Nov., 1855.

“ Newcastle-on-Tyne, Orphan-House.

“ SIR,

“ AN application has been made to the Charity Commissioners respecting the above charity, whereby it appears that by a Deed dated 5th March, 1745, (enrolled in Chancery, 6th June, 1746,) the Rev. John Wesley, deceased, gave the house and appurtenances known as the

Newcastle Orphan-House to certain trustees, on trust that, after the death of himself and his brother Charles, they should monthly or oftener appoint one or more fit and proper persons to teach and expound God's holy word in the same manner, as near as may be, as God's holy word was then expounded there ; and upon further trust, that the school to be taught in part of the said house and premises should be kept up, and consist of one master and one mistress, and of forty poor children, as the trustees or the major part of them should from time to time appoint.

“ Complaints have been made to the Commissioners, that the trusts of the above-recited Deed, as regards the preaching in the Orphan-House, are not now carried out, the preaching therein having been discontinued for many years ; and that, although a small infants'-school is carried on in a part of the building, the residue of the premises is let out in separate tenements, and that the rents thereof have for several years been received and appropriated by or for the trustees of the Brunswick Methodist chapel at Newcastle.

“ It having been stated to the Commissioners that you are acting as the treasurer of the charity funds, and [they,] desiring to inform themselves as to the actual employment of such funds, have found that no returns have been made to them of the accounts of the charity for the years 1853 and 1854, in compliance with the 61st section of the Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, of which I enclose a copy. They request therefore that the duty of making those returns may be discharged without delay, and that those for the separate years may be separately made. I enclose forms on which the accounts may be conveniently stated.

“ I enclose also a form of general inquiry, and also of inquiry into the school ; and request you to return them to this office filled up, and at the same time to state whether

the Commissioners have been correctly informed with regard to the above statements.

“I am, sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“HENRY M. VANE,

“Mr. Ralph Wilson,

“Secretary.

“Draper,

“Newcastle-on-Tyne.”

No idea was entertained by the promoters of the Orphan-House transformation, that the party whose complaints originated the preceding communication had acted in any spirit of friendliness toward the Wesleyans, or the object they sought to accomplish. It was, however, gratifying to find, that nothing had been urged as matter of complaint, but what in “the case” then in course of preparation was frankly stated. In the interim, the following letter was forwarded by Mr. Treasurer Wilson :—

“To the Secretary of the Charitable Trusts’ Commission.

“Orphan-House,

“Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nov. 29th, 1855.

“SIR,

“I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your communication, dated the 26th inst., making inquiry respecting the above property, and requesting a statement of the income from the same during the years 1853 and 1854.

“I am desired by the trustees (not being one myself) to inform you, that there is a property of the above designation, originally erected by the late Rev. John Wesley, and settled by him on trustees for the use and benefit of the Wesleyan Methodists in this town. In the original Deed, there is a clause referring to the education of forty poor children: but this does not appear, so far as any certain information can be obtained, ever

to have been carried into effect during Mr. Wesley's life-time, nor since his death; no endowment having been provided for the support and maintenance of the master and mistress.

"In the year 1820, or thereabouts, the Orphan-House was found much too small to accommodate the Society and congregation worshipping there; when, in conjunction with the said congregation, and with the sanction of the Wesleyan Conference, the Brunswick-place chapel, a large and commodious structure, was erected in the immediate vicinity, as a substitute for the Orphan-House, and for some time was designated 'The New Orphan-House;' towards the expense of which the trustees and other parties contributed liberally.

"The trustees are under the impression, that these and other facts connected with this property have not been communicated by your informant.

"I am further directed to state, that the chapel portion of the property having become increasingly dilapidated, and, from its peculiar construction, almost unfit (for the last two or three years) for any occupation whatever, the trustees, along with the officers and members of the Wesleyan church, and in conjunction with the Wesleyan Conference, have for some time been contemplating an entire removal of the old buildings, and the erection, on the *same site*, of large and commodious schools, to contain from three hundred to four hundred children,—the schools to be subject to the regulations of the 'Committee of Council on Education.' An expenditure of £2,500 will be involved; which sum is to be raised by voluntary contributions, and towards which large amounts have been already given and promised.

"I am further instructed to say, that the scheme, as above stated, and mutually agreed upon by all the parties interested, has been for *several months* in the hands of Messrs. Fenwicks and Falconar, the solicitors of the

trustees, in connexion with T. Percival Bunting, Esq., of Manchester, solicitor, . . . to be by them prepared and laid before the Charitable Trusts' Commissioners; which case, I am informed by these gentlemen, will be ready for presentation to the Commissioners in a few days.

“ This would have been done, and was intended to have been done, by the trustees, upwards of eighteen months ago, or more; but they were wishful, along with the other parties concerned, to present to the Commissioners a well-digested scheme, combining all the original designs of their venerated founder, but on a much more extended and efficient scale.

“ You will be aware that delay, as in this case, is often unavoidable. The trustees, therefore, hope to be exonerated from all suspicion of remissness in their duty, or any disrespect to the Charitable Trusts' Commissioners.

“ The trustees, as to their administration of the funds, have nothing to conceal; but are ready now, or at any time, to give the fullest information in their power.

“ They have invariably acted with the concurrence and for the benefit of the parties for whom the property was originally designed; and, as they believe, in strict accordance with the spirit of the original Deed.

“ Having given you a general view of the matter, and referring you to the case shortly to be presented by our solicitors,

“ I am, sir,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ RALPH WILSON.”

To the above communication was appended an account of the income and expenditure of “ the charity ” for the years 1853 and 1854.

The “ case,” as forwarded to the Charity Commissioners, on the 1st of December, 1855, after reciting the

provisions of the original Deed, and those of subsequent ones, states that the premises are now vested, by survivorship, in John Beckington, George Bargate, John Nichol, and Ralph Hodgson;—that for three years past the Orphan-House property had been let on lease, at an annual rental of £80;—that the circumstances under which the sale of the premises is now proposed, are,— that the Orphan-House, as a place of worship, was superseded by the erection of the Brunswick-place chapel; one condition of which erection was, that the Orphan-House should be sold, and the proceeds applied in liquidation of the debt resting on the new chapel; or that, till sold, the income arising therefrom should be placed at the disposal of the Brunswick-place trustees;—and that an offer is now made to purchase the Orphan-House estate, in order to erect thereon large and commodious schools, and, by transferring the frontage of the property to the Brunswick-place trustees, so far to lessen their liability. A suggestion is given, how the purchase-money (£1,500 being offered) should be appropriated; and, in conclusion, the trustees submit, that, with the consent of the Charity Commissioners, they will be authorized thus to act.

After a lapse of little more than three months, the following answer was returned to the solicitors:—

“ Charity Commission,
“ 8 York-street, St. James’s-square,
“ 6th March, 1856.

“ Orphan-House Charity, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ I AM directed to inform you that the Board have given very full consideration to the application which was forwarded to them by you in December, 1855, on the part of the surviving trustees of the above-mentioned charity; and they have also had before them a communi-

cation of previous date, received from Mr. James Nichols, one of the general secretaries of the General Wesleyan Reform Committee, suggesting that there was a misappropriation of the income derivable from the rents of this property.

“I am directed to state to you, that, although the Board have power, under the 24th section of the Charitable Trusts Act, to authorize the sale of charity property, such power is only to be exercised where the proposed sale will be on such terms as to increase the income of the particular charity, or will otherwise be advantageous to the charity; and, where the Board *do* give their authority, they are also to give such directions for securing the due investment of the money arising from any such sale (upon the same trusts) as they may think fit.

“The Board are unable to give their authority to sell the estate of the Orphan-House charity, founded by the Reverend John Wesley, for the purpose of applying the proceeds for the benefit of another and different trust called the Brunswick-chapel trust, whether in reducing a mortgage on Brunswick chapel or otherwise; nor can the Board (duly considering the judgment of the Lord Chancellor in the case of the Attorney-General *v.* Clapham) concur in any measure which would in any way tend to affect the constitution of the Orphan-House charity.

“I am, gentlemen,
“Your obedient servant,
“HENRY M. VANE,
“Secretary.”

The decision thus pronounced by the Charity Commissioners was doubtless, in their deliberate judgment, “according to law;” yet, by the promoters of this school and chapel scheme, it was felt to be one of those occasional

instances in which law strictly interpreted and the infliction of moral wrong are in close approximation. The Orphan-House was unquestionably built by Wesley in furtherance of great evangelistic efforts, in which at that early period he was zealously engaged, and which, viewed in connexion with its subsequent appropriation during the lifetime of Wesley, may be regarded as one of the institutions of early Methodism. Its Deed was seriously defective; yet the design of its erection, and the parties for whose benefit alone it was founded, cannot be, with any, matters of uncertainty or doubt. In the erection of the Brunswick-place chapel as its substitute, by the Orphan-House trustees and congregation, at an expense of upwards of £6,000, the preaching purposes originally contemplated were far more extensively and permanently carried out; whilst, instead of a school for forty poor children, (which, so far as can be ascertained, never had an existence, save in the intentions of Wesley, or on the parchment on which the Deed had been engrossed,) it was now proposed, at an expense of some £3,000, to erect schools for the accommodation and instruction of at least **TEN TIMES** that number. But, in the decision of the Commissioners, we are directed to regard the Orphan-House of Wesley as a "charity" *per se*, and the wording of its Deed, irrespective of any other consideration, as rigidly binding; thus shutting up the Wesleyans of Newcastle to the alternative,—either to leave the house where their "fathers worshipped," in its growing dilapidation, to crumble into ruin; or, by the re-purchase of the property, (property of which they had had uninterrupted possession for **ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN YEARS,**) to secure a site so intimately connected with every reminiscence of early Methodism in the north of England. Previously to any final decision on these points, the trustees addressed the following memorial to the Charity Commissioners:—

“ To the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales.

“ In the matter of the charity called ‘ The Orphan-House,’ situate in the parish of St. Andrew, in the town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne :

“ THE undersigned, being all the surviving trustees of the above-mentioned charity, submit the following further notice and statement :—

“ 1. The refusal of the Board to sanction the proposed sale, which refusal the trustees receive with the greatest respect and deference, places the trustees in a position of serious embarrassment. They stand possessed of the trust-property in a very dilapidated, and decayed, and an almost useless condition. Even were the place rebuilt, (for which, however, there are no funds,) the trustees lack funds to carry out the educational objects of the founder. Nor can the trustees, without funds to provide salaries, find ‘ one or more fit person or persons to preach and expound God’s holy word in the said house, in the same manner, as near as may be, as God’s holy word was preached and expounded there ’ in 1745 ; such persons receiving their appointments ‘ monthly or oftener,’ being also ‘ preachers or ministers,’ and being required to preach ‘ twice every day.’ Did no other difficulty exist, the trustees do not know what is meant by the term ‘ preachers or ministers.’*

“ 2. Assuming, for the present purpose, that the trustees cannot carry out the apparent designs of the founder,—and, further, that the Board cannot sanction the appropriation of the present income of the charity to the Brunswick trust-estate,—as the case now stands, the trustees do not know what to do ; for, even if the whole income were expended in repairs, the property cannot stand many years.

* i.e., Regarding the Orphan-House with its Deed, as a “ charity ” *per se.*

“ Under these circumstances, the trustees, anxious only to do right, specially need the advice and direction of the Board, or of the Court of Chancery. If they are compelled to go to the Court of Chancery, then they hope that the certificate of the Board will enable them to take the directions of the Court in the fullest possible manner, and to submit as a scheme, if the Court shall direct a scheme, the project which has already been submitted to the Board.

“ The trustees therefore apply to the Board for their advice and direction on the whole subject; and, if the Board shall think proper, for permission to institute proceedings in Chancery, for effecting,

“ 1. The establishment of a scheme for the regulation of the charity; or,

“ 2. The obtaining of such other order and direction, or relief, as the Court of Chancery may deem right.

“ The trustees respectfully submit to the Board the urgency of the case. Funds to be raised by voluntary contributions can now be and are being collected, by means of which a large and permanent educational foundation, upon conditions sanctioned by the Privy Council and Legislature, may be created; and the loss of the present season for building may seriously interfere with the enterprise. The trustees, or their solicitors, will be most happy to give in person, or in writing, any additional explanations which may be required.

“ We respectively declare the above statement is in all respects true, according to our information and belief.

“ Dated this 14th day of March, 1856.

“ JOHN BECKINGTON,

“ GEORGE BARGATE,

“ JOHN NICHOL,

“ RALPH HODGSON.”

Shortly after, the trustees received, through Messrs. Bunting and Bingham, the following reply, stating how far

the powers vested in the Commissioners would enable them to act in "the case" thus further placed before them:—

"Charity Commission,
"8, York-street, St. James's-square,
"29th March, 1856.

"Orphan-House charity, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

"GENTLEMEN,

.

"I am directed to state that you were amply justified in representing to your clients* that the communication received by the Board from Mr. Nichols has had no influence upon their decision. I have already stated to you the purport of the only communication received from Mr. Nichols. It contained no reference to the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham*; and it is open to inspection at any time.

"With regard to the observations made by you on the Lord Chancellor's judgment in the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham*, I am directed to state to you, that, until that judgment shall be reversed by a higher tribunal, it must be the rule by which this Board will be governed. The Board can sanction no measures, and it would seem hopeless to submit to a judge of the Court of Chancery any scheme, in contravention of that judgment.

"The Board, however, are fully disposed to sanction any measures calculated to preserve the property from further decay, or deterioration in value. If it be shown that under the circumstances a sale of the property would be advantageous to the charity, the Board could authorize

* The preceding memorial was accompanied by a letter from the solicitors to the trustees; in which, in connexion with some remarks on the judgment of Lord Chancellor Cranworth in the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham*, they state,—"We have assured our clients, that as a communication received from a Mr. James Nichols has not been forwarded to them, so as to give them an opportunity of reply, it has had no influence on the decision of the Board."

the sale, and direct the investment of the money upon trusts corresponding to the existing settlements of the land; or if a sale of a *part* (for instance, that which is coloured *pink* in the plan) were advantageous, the Board could authorize the sale of such part, and the application of all or any part of the purchase-money in new buildings, or in repairing and improving existing buildings, upon the remaining part of the land,—the Board being satisfied that such acts would be beneficial to the charity. Or, if (without any sale) the trustees could raise a sufficient sum on mortgage of the property for the purpose of repairing existing buildings, or erecting new ones, the Board could authorize the raising money by mortgage, and the application of such money to these purposes;—none of these acts involving any change of the existing trusts. On the last subject, I refer you to the Charitable Trusts Act, 1853, section 21; and the Charitable Trusts Amendment Act, 1855, section 30.

“The trustees will consider these suggestions; but if they should still think it a better course under present circumstances to apply to the Court of Chancery, for the establishment of a scheme for the regulation of the charity, and for such further or other order as the Court may deem fit, and shall require the certificate of the Board for that purpose, the Board will be prepared to take such an application into their full consideration. The trustees would, no doubt, duly estimate the difficulties which under present circumstances may attend the case, considering the expense which an application to the Court may give rise to, and the results which may be expected to flow from it.

“I am, gentlemen,

“Your obedient servant,

“HENRY M. VANE,

“Messrs. Bunting & Bingham,

“Secretary.”

“Solicitors, Manchester.”

After carefully reviewing the whole case, and having had by deputation an interview with the Charity Commissioners at their offices in London, the trustees, in conjunction with the Provisional Committee, unanimously decided—as the most prudent method of extricating themselves from numerous existing and anticipated difficulties—to re-purchase the Orphan-House property; and at once authorized their solicitors to make to the Commissioners the following proposal:—

“To the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales.

“Orphan-House, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

“GENTLEMEN,

“THE trustees of the charity have carefully considered your communication of the 29th March, and the statements made by the Board to the deputation from the trustees on the 24th of April last.

“They now request the Board to authorize the sale of the whole of the charity property to the gentlemen* who previously proposed to purchase it. (See the first application to the Board.) They propose that the price shall be £1,100, being as they conceive its full present value; or, if the Commissioners prefer another course, then such a price as shall be fixed by a local surveyor approved by the Board. The price previously named was £1,500: this sum was much higher than the real value; but, under the scheme first proposed, price was not an object to the purchasers.

“The trustees will take the instructions of the Board as to the investment of the purchase-money. Probably, the Commissioners will think it right that the vacancies in the trusteeship shall be supplied at the same time.

* Messrs. Falconar, senior, Stephenson, and Bainbridge, who acted as intermediate parties in carrying out the proposed scheme.

“The Wesleyan Society in Newcastle will thus re-purchase its own property: but it must submit.

“We are, gentlemen,

“Your very obedient servants,

“BUNTING and BINGHAM,

“Manchester, May 20th, 1856.

“Henry M. Vane, Esq.,

“Charity Commission,

“8, York-street, St. James’s-square,

“London.”

In reply, the Commissioners state, that they will be prepared to authorize the proposed sale of the property, “on being satisfied that the sale would be advantageous to the charity, and that the sum proposed to be paid would cover the expense of re-investment.” They therefore require “the report of an independent surveyor,” as to the value of the property;—that “something should be added, say £50, to the real value of the premises, in order to meet the expenses of re-investing in land;”—that the purchasers “should accept the title, and agree to save the charity harmless from all cost and expense in the matter;”—that the purchase-money “should in the meantime be paid to the account of the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds, who would invest in consols, and hold the stock and the dividends upon the original trusts;”—and that “notice of the intended sale at the proposed price should be posted upon the premises.” They also suggest, that, considering “the complication of the matter, it is not necessary, and perhaps not desirable, to add to the existing number of trustees of the Orphan-House.”

The valuation of Mr. Thomas Bell, the surveyor appointed by the Commissioners, being considerably less than the sum previously offered, it was suggested to the Board, that the sum named by Mr. Bell as the value of the property should be the price now paid by the purchasing party. It was

also submitted, whether, under the circumstances of the case, it would not be expedient to supply the vacancies in the trust, and to invest the purchase-money in the names of the completed body of trustees, jointly with those of the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds ; inasmuch as the Wesleyans, having been compelled to purchase their own property, were anxious to preserve some kind of interest, subject necessarily to the directions of the Court of Chancery, in the proceeds of the sale.

None of these suggestions met with approval from the Charity Commissioners. In a communication addressed to the solicitors, bearing date the 2d of July, 1856, and signed, "Henry M. Vane, Secretary," the trustees are reminded, that "Mr. Bell was not appointed as an arbitrator, to decide what the purchase-money should be, but only as a surveyor, to say whether £1,100 was sufficient." "The purchasers," they therefore decide, "must make their offer at the sum of £1,100 ; but, in consequence of that sum being above the valuation of the surveyor, the Board will not insist upon requiring that anything be added in order to cover the expense of re-investment."

"I am also to state," the secretary continues, "that your suggestion that the purchase-money should be invested in the names of the completed body of trustees jointly with those of the Official Trustees, is incompatible with the objects of the Charitable Trusts Act, and with the practice of the Board." He further adds, "With reference to the remark, that the Wesleyan Society in Newcastle will, in the matter of the proposed purchase, be compelled to re-purchase its own property, it is to be observed that certain gentlemen connected with the Brunswick-chapel trust propose to purchase property belonging to the Orphan-House charity, founded by the Rev. John Wesley ; which property, it appears to the Board (as matters at present stand), must be consi-

dered separate and distinct. If, however, it should eventually be held otherwise by the highest court of judicature, the property and the purchase-money will merge in the same hands."

The offer of £1,100 was consequently renewed; and, shortly after, the following announcement was for fifteen days posted on the door of the Orphan-House:—

“In the matter of the charity called ‘The Orphan-House,’ in the parish of St. Andrew, in the town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne:

“NOTICE is hereby given, that the ground, shops, and buildings, known as the Orphan-House, situate in Northumberland-street, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, aforesaid, with the appurtenances, and which form the property of or belonging to the above-mentioned charity, as conveyed and settled in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, by the late Reverend John Wesley, are proposed to be forthwith sold by the trustees of the charity, by private contract, under the authority of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, for the sum of one thousand one hundred pounds, unless some sufficient objection to such sale shall be made and notified to the said Commissioners at their office, No. 8, York-street, Saint James’s-square, London, within fifteen days from the date hereof.

“Dated the 26th day of July, 1856.”

The authorization of sale bears date August 15th, 1856, and runs as follows:—

“In the matter of the charity called ‘The Orphan-House,’ in the parish of Saint Andrew, in the town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne:

“WHEREAS the trustees of the above-mentioned charity have made application to the Board of Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, for the authority of

the said Board to sell the ground, shops, and buildings, known as the Orphan-House, situate in Northumberland-street, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the property of the above-mentioned charity, and settled thereon, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-five, by the late Reverend John Wesley, representing that such sale will be advantageous to the charity; and public notice of the said proposed sale has been given under the direction of the said Commissioners, who have received no notice of any objection thereto:

“ Now the said Board, upon consideration of the circumstances, and of a valuation and report made by Thomas Bell, of Newcastle aforesaid, surveyor, confirming the representation of the said trustees, do hereby authorize the trustees of the said charity to sell the aforesaid ground, shops, and buildings, to any person willing to purchase the same, at the price of not less than one thousand one hundred pounds, and to give conclusive discharges for the moneys to arise from such sale, and to do and execute all such acts and assurances as may be proper for carrying such sale into complete effect. And the said Board direct that the clear amount of the purchase-money to arise from such sale shall be forthwith paid or remitted by the said trustees to the banking account of ‘the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds,’ at the Bank of England; and that the amount to be so paid or remitted shall thereupon be invested by the said Official Trustees in the purchase in their name of stock in the public funds, to be held in trust for the said charity until the same shall be converted or re-invested, under the order of the said Board, in the purchase of land or other real estate; and that the dividends and income to arise from the stock to be so purchased, shall be paid or remitted by the said Official Trustees to the managing trustees for the time being of the said charity, and shall

be applied by them as part of the general income thereof.

“Sealed, by order of the Board, this fifteenth day of August, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six.

“HENRY M. VANE,
“Secretary.”

On the 10th of March, 1857, in pursuance of the foregoing directions, the purchase-money (£1,100) was forwarded to “the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds.” This sum, converted into stock, realized, in the Consolidated Three per Cent. Annuities, £1,173. 6s. 8d.; which amount is now held by the “Official Trustees,” on the original trusts of the Orphan-House charity.

After the lapse of nearly five months, the school-portion of the Orphan-House estate was transferred, on the provisions of the Wesleyan Model School-Deed, to the following gentlemen as trustees:—

GEORGE BARGATE,

MATTHEW SLEE,

JOHN NICHOL,

JOSEPH HOPPER,

RALPH WILSON,

WILLIAM A. FALCONAR,

JOHN WARD,

JACOB VICKERS,

JOHN B. FALCONAR, JUN.,

JOHN GILHEESPY,

JOHN G. FENWICK,

ROBERT ROBSON,

MATTHEW M. YOULL,

WILLIAM PEARSON,

ROBERT CURTICE,

WILLIAM H. STEPHENSON,

RICHARD BURNAND.

The Deed bears date August 1st, 1857.

The last communication received from the Charity Commissioners refers to the authorization by the trustees of some individual to receive, on their behalf, the dividends arising from stock, purchased under the direction of the Board. Such authorization was given in the following form:—

“ In the matter of the Orphan-House charity, in the parish of Saint Andrew, in the town and county of Newcastle-upon Tyne :

“ We, the undersigned, acting trustees of the above-named charity, hereby request the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds to pay the dividends due, and to become due, on the sum of £1,173. 6s. 8d., Consolidated Three per Cent. Annuities, belonging to the said charity, standing in their name, half-yearly, to Ralph Wilson, of the town and county of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, woollen-draper, whom we have authorized to give a proper receipt for the same.

“ Dated this 18th day of January, 1858.

“ GEORGE BARGATE.

“ JOHN NICHOL.

“ RALPH HODGSON.”

Mr. Beckington, the senior trustee, had during the pending of these proceedings, at a very advanced age, departed this life.

On the decease of Mr. Wilson, which took place on the 15th of December, 1860, Mr. Bargate, on the authority of a similar document, was appointed to succeed him in the treasurership of the Orphan-House charity.

The intricate questions at issue were thus—although not perhaps in the most satisfactory manner—settled. The site of Wesley’s Orphan-House was by re-purchase secured in perpetuity to the people bearing his name; for whose benefit, indeed, the institution had been founded; and by whom the educational plans and purposes of Wesley were being carried out to an extent tenfold beyond what he had ever contemplated. The purchase-money, now vested in the public funds,—on the doctrine laid down by the Charity Commissioners,—can only be appropriated in carrying out the terms of the original Deed: *e.g.*, the appointment “monthly, or oftener,” by

“ Under these circumstances, the trustees, anxious only to do right, specially need the advice and direction of the Board, or of the Court of Chancery. If they are compelled to go to the Court of Chancery, then they hope that the certificate of the Board will enable them to take the directions of the Court in the fullest possible manner, and to submit as a scheme, if the Court shall direct a scheme, the project which has already been submitted to the Board.

“ The trustees therefore apply to the Board for their advice and direction on the whole subject; and, if the Board shall think proper, for permission to institute proceedings in Chancery, for effecting,

“ 1. The establishment of a scheme for the regulation of the charity; or,

“ 2. The obtaining of such other order and direction, or relief, as the Court of Chancery may deem right.

“ The trustees respectfully submit to the Board the urgency of the case. Funds to be raised by voluntary contributions can now be and are being collected, by means of which a large and permanent educational foundation, upon conditions sanctioned by the Privy Council and Legislature, may be created; and the loss of the present season for building may seriously interfere with the enterprise. The trustees, or their solicitors, will be most happy to give in person, or in writing, any additional explanations which may be required.

“ We respectively declare the above statement is in all respects true, according to our information and belief.

“ Dated this 14th day of March, 1856.

“ JOHN BECKINGTON,

“ GEORGE BARGATE,

“ JOHN NICHOL,

“ RALPH HODGSON.”

Shortly after, the trustees received, through Messrs. Bunting and Bingham, the following reply, stating how far

the powers vested in the Commissioners would enable them to act in "the case" thus further placed before them:—

"Charity Commission,

"8, York-street, St. James's-square,

"29th March, 1856.

"Orphan-House charity, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I am directed to state that you were amply justified in representing to your clients* that the communication received by the Board from Mr. Nichols has had no influence upon their decision. I have already stated to you the purport of the only communication received from Mr. Nichols. It contained no reference to the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham*; and it is open to inspection at any time.

"With regard to the observations made by you on the Lord Chancellor's judgment in the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham*, I am directed to state to you, that, until that judgment shall be reversed by a higher tribunal, it must be the rule by which this Board will be governed. The Board can sanction no measures, and it would seem hopeless to submit to a judge of the Court of Chancery any scheme, in contravention of that judgment.

"The Board, however, are fully disposed to sanction any measures calculated to preserve the property from further decay, or deterioration in value. If it be shown that under the circumstances a sale of the property would be advantageous to the charity, the Board could authorize

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the trustees, of "preachers or ministers;" such ministerial agents preaching twice every day throughout the year; together with the establishment and maintenance of a school for forty poor children, with one master and one mistress; and this, without any funds for the re-erection of the house, the stipends of the preachers, or the salaries of the teachers thus to be employed; so that, unless increased powers be vested in the Charity Commissioners, or the decision of Lord Chancellor Cranworth in the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham* be set aside by a higher tribunal, successive generations of trustees may pass away ere the funded moneys so far accumulate as to render practicable the accomplishment of the above-named purposes; and even then, as now, the *literal* observance of the requirements of the Deed will simply be a thing not to be done. Still, bearing in recollection the designs of Wesley in the establishment of the Orphan-House, and in its subsequent appropriation, the hope is confidently cherished, that ere long what is manifestly the *equity* of the case will be secured,*—the appropriation

* In referring* to the decision of Lord Chancellor Cranworth, in the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham*,—which decision, in the judgment of the Charity Commissioners, forbade their going beyond the four corners of the Deed of 1745,—the only distinction which strikes a non-professional eye is one of degree. In both cases, trusts created during the infancy of Wesley's system were found to be incompatible with the system as ultimately developed. The question was, Which must give way,—the system itself, or the mode by which it was sought to develop it? The future must, finally, decide this question; and the course of events has not given any greater authority to the opinion of the able lawyer who, when the case of *The Attorney-General v. Clapham* was considered, happened to be the judge of the superior court, than to that of the other able lawyer who, at that time, happened to be the inferior judge. Perhaps the true solution of the difficulty is to be found in what is called, in legal language, the doctrine of "Cy-pres;" or, in other words, the doctrine that, when it becomes impossible to comply precisely with the terms by which a trust is created, the trust must be executed, as nearly as possible, in conformity with the intentions of the founder of the trust. In the

of the funded money in the support or extension of the schools erected on the Orphan-House site; and in lessening the liability yet resting on the trustees of the Brunswick-place chapel,—“the New Orphan-House,” as, on its erection, it was for some time designated.

To place the affairs of this noble structure upon a safe and prosperous basis, was one object contemplated in the scheme sanctioned by the Orphan-House trustees. By the well-timed aid of the Wesleyan Chapel Committee, seconded by the generous subscriptions of others, the debt resting on the Brunswick-place trust-premises was, in effect, reduced by £3,000. Under the authority of the Court of Chancery, the Deed was renewed, and the trust-estate placed in the hands of new and highly-efficient trustees.

The decree of the Court is as follows :—

“ VICE-CHANCELLOR STUART.

“ Friday, the 13th day of February, in the
20th year of the reign of Her Majesty
Mr. Leach, } Queen Victoria, 1857. IN THE MATTER
Registrar, } of the Trustee Act, 1850; AND in the
157. matter of the trusts of the Brunswick-
place chapel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne :

“ UPON the petition of John Beckington, John Reay, George Bargate, John Nichol, and Ralph Hodgson, all of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, surviving trustees of the Brunswick-place chapel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on the 28th day of January, 1857, preferred unto the Right Honourable the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain : And upon hearing counsel for the petitioners: And upon reading the said petition; Indentures of lease and release, dated the 14th and 15th days of July, 1824; the affidavit (501) of Ralph Wilson and William Henry Taylor, filed Newcastle case, what could be more in conformity with the intentions of John Wesley, than the scheme proposed by the trustees in their first application to the Charity Commissioners?

the 28th day of January, 1857, as to the death of all the parties of the fourth part to the said Indenture of release, except the petitioners, and as to the election at a meeting held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the said chapel, of the proposed new trustees, and as to their fitness; the consent, in writing marked B, signed by the proposed new trustees, to act; and the affidavit of William Henry Taylor, filed the 28th day of January, 1857, verifying the signatures thereto: And it appearing by the evidence aforesaid that all the trustees of the Indentures dated the 14th and 15th days of July, 1824, are dead, except the petitioners, and that the petitioners, John Beckington, John Reay, and Ralph Hodgson, are desirous of retiring from the trusts thereof; and that it is necessary to appoint new trustees, and that it is impracticable to do so without the assistance of this Court: THIS COURT doth order that John Brunton Falconar, the elder, of Forres-villa, near Gateshead, in the county of Durham, gentleman, Ralph Wilson, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, woollen-draper, William Stephenson, of Throckley-house, in the county of Northumberland, farmer, Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, linen-draper, John Ward, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, grocer, John Brunton Falconar, the younger, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, gentleman, John George Fenwick, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, tanner, Matthew Moralee Youll, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, agent, William Alexander Falconar, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, brewer, John Gilhespy, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, agent, Joseph Hopper, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, miller, Jacob Vickers, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, agent, William Haswell Stephenson, of Throckley aforesaid, firebrick manufacturer, Robert Curtice, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, professional reporter, Matthew Slee, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, potato-merchant, William Pearson, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, agent, Robert Robson, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, grocer, and Richard Burnand, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, gunmaker, be appointed trustees

of the said Indentures, and of the messuage, tenement, or building used as a Methodist meeting-house, and all others the messuages, tenements, and hereditaments comprised in the said Indentures, in the place and stead, and in substitution, of such deceased trustees, and of the said petitioners John Beckington, John Reay, and Ralph Hodgson, jointly with the petitioners George Bargate and John Nichol. **AND IT IS ORDERED** that all the said messuages, tenements, and premises do vest in such new trustees, and the said George Bargate and John Nichol, for all the estate and interest now vested in the petitioners as such surviving trustees, as aforesaid, to be held by the said new trustees and the said George Bargate and John Nichol upon the trusts declared by the said Indentures, dated the 14th and 15th days of July, 1824, concerning the same or such of them as are now subsisting or capable of taking effect, and subject to the mortgage therein mentioned, and all other the charges or incumbrances affecting the same.*

(L.S.) "Entered.

"G. L. for E. A."

* The Blenheim-street chapel Deed was renewed on the 21st of December, 1857, and the trust-estate vested in the following gentlemen, as trustees:—Ralph Wilson, John Nichol, Henry Jefferson, John B. Falconar, senior, John Green, George Marshall, George Bargate, William Stephenson, Emerson M. Bainbridge, John B. Falconar, junior, Robert Curtice, John Ward, John G. Fenwick, John Gilhespy, Robert Wilson, William A. Falconar, Jacob Vickers, Robert Robson, William H. Stephenson, William Pearson, and Edward Richardson.

CHAPTER X.

1856—1858.

Farewell-service at the Orphan-House—Charles Hutton, LL.D.—William A. Hails—William Potter—Mrs. Potter—John Simpson—Thomas Heath—John Todd—Walter Stone—John Daglish—Charles N. Wawn—Jane Gibson—Thomas Stanley—Margaret Morrison—Ralph Wilson—Elizabeth Bargate—Richard Grainger—Public breakfast at the Exchange Hotel—Embryo Bible Society at the Orphan-House—Public procession—Foundation-stone of new Orphan-House schools laid by Mr. Falconar—Copy of document placed in the stone—Addresses by John B. Falconar, Esq., and Rev. John Scott—Architectural description of the school-building—Successful schools' bazaar—Opening of the new Orphan-House schools—Concluding remarks.

PREVIOUSLY to the taking down of the old building, it was deemed desirable to hold a farewell-service within its walls. On Wednesday, September 10th, 1856, a social meeting, attended by nearly six hundred persons, was held in the lower part of the Orphan-House chapel. The galleries, though disused for more than thirty years past, were prepared for the occasion, and, with the band-room and other apartments, including Mr. Wesley's study, were thrown open to the inspection of the public. Amongst those assembled, in addition to the members of the Wesleyan Society, (the poorer part of whom were admitted gratuitously,) were members of several other religious communities, whose ancestors or friends had in former days worshipped in this ancient structure, or had been connected with its Sabbath-school. With men verging toward fourscore, were “little ones,”—the great-great-grandchildren of former Orphan-House worshippers; the old making known to the young “the work” done “in their days, and in the days of old; that the generation to

come might know them, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments." Reminiscences, at once interesting and hallowed, were thus awakened.* The whole of the proceedings were fraught with more than ordinary interest.

Among the earlier or later worshippers in this time-honoured structure, the following claim at least a passing notice :—

1. CHARLES HUTTON, LL.D., the eminent mathematician, who for four-and-thirty years filled the mathematical professor's chair at Woolwich College, near London, was in early life a devoted member of the Methodist Society, and an acceptable local preacher, in connexion with the Orphan-House, Newcastle. He was born August 14th, 1737; and is spoken of † as a youth of great docility and simplicity of manners, serious, sincere, affectionate, and devout. His youthful devoutness was indicated by the fact, that, when about eleven years of age, he formed a little retired arbour in an adjoining wood, into which he was wont to step aside to pray, as he passed to and from school. At that period, he destroyed a large number of ballads and border-legends which, *con amore*, he had collected. He was designed for his father's occupation, that of a colliery-viewer; but, from an injury received in early life, he was considered unfit for that position, and, following the natural bent of his mind, he prepared himself to become a mathematical teacher: in this capacity he gave instruction at Jesmund, when only eighteen years of

* One interesting custom was specially referred to. After the week-evening preaching, the members of Society present were accustomed to repair to the band-room above the chapel, from whence, after uniting in the singing of a hymn given out by the officiating minister, they retired to their several class-rooms; thus avoiding the sadly discordant effect produced by the concurrent singing of several classes in close proximity with each other.

† Annual Biography, 1823.

age. On removing subsequently to Newcastle, his scholars became numerous; one of whom was the late Lord Chancellor Eldon. Young Scott's connexion with the schoolmaster Hutton confirms the well-supported tradition that Lords Stowell and Eldon,* when young, were frequently found in the orchestra of the Orphan-House. Dr. Hutton's principal literary effort was when employed for six consecutive years, with Drs. Pearson and Shaw, in an abridgment of "The Philosophical Transactions," subsequently published in eighteen thick quarto volumes. He died January 27th, 1823, *ætat.* 86; his whole life having been characterized "by simplicity, liberality, energy, and benevolence."

2. WILLIAM ANTHONY HAILS, an Orphan-House local preacher and class-leader, was a profound mathematician, as well as linguist. The late Bishop Barrington pronounced him to be the best Hebrew scholar in the north of England. He was an excellent classic, and well versed also in polemical exercise. He published an able refutation of Volney's "Ruins," in a volume of four hundred pages, characterized by great learning and acumen; as well as several minor works in defence of our Saviour's claims to the Messiahship. Though somewhat *angular* in his mental conformation, he was highly esteemed by those who knew him. In the eighty-fifth year of his age he died in peace.

3. WILLIAM POTTER, for many years an active and intelligent office-bearer in the Orphan-House Society, was seriously impressed under a sermon preached by Mr. Wesley, outside of Pandon-gate, on the 20th of May, 1764. "His attentive ear imbibed the truth, and retained it as the guiding principle of his life." He is characterized as "a man of extraordinary energy, physical and

* William Scott, the father of these eminent men, then residing in Love-lane, Newcastle, was a "fitter;" i.e., "a middle man," acting between the coal-owner and the shipper.

mental, and of abounding benevolence. Many owed their first success in life to his helping hand." After a brief illness, he exchanged time for immortality, on the 31st of December, 1833; leaving behind him "an unblemished name, and a blessed memory."

4. MRS. POTTER was a lady of Scotch descent. When but a child, she was taken by a pious servant in Edinburgh to hear Mr. Wesley. The venerable man, when descending from the pulpit, laid his hand upon her head, and invoked a blessing upon her; an incident to which, in after years, she always referred with much feeling. Throughout a lengthened life she was characterized by suavity of temper, by dignified propriety of mind and manners, and uniform devotedness to God. "So lovely and venerable a 'mother in Israel,'" writes an eminent Wesleyan minister, who, in 1851, was her Conference guest, "has been rarely seen; such Christian simplicity, brightened by intelligence; so much of tranquil dignity, blended with the lowness which accompanies all other mellowing graces of the Spirit. Mrs. Potter's conversation, never of the common order, was often vivid with thought, and diversified by anecdotes of almost historic interest, relating to the olden time and its celebrities; but always overflowing with kindness, and hallowed by religion. . . . After more than eighty winters her mind was broad awake, and her heart as warm as it could have been in the glow of her life's meridian." At six o'clock on the evening of Sunday, March 11th, 1855, as the pealing bells gave note of earthly service, she entered the heavenly sanctuary.*

The daughter of Mr. Potter by a former wife was married to Alderman William Armstrong; one fruit of which marriage was William, now Sir William G. Armstrong, of world-wide celebrity.

* Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine, 1856, p. 677.

5, 6. JOHN SIMPSON and THOMAS HEATH, from their singular attachment to each other, being rarely met with alone, may be regarded as the David and Jonathan of the Orphan-House flock. Mr. Simpson was, for many years, the organist of St. John's church, and at the same time a successful leader in the Newcastle Society. He had a remarkably correct and sensitive musical taste. Mr. Heath was a devoted Christian, characterized by great tenderness of spirit and nervous susceptibility; weeping with those who wept, and rejoicing with those who rejoiced: so quick, in his case, was the transition from one state to the other, that he almost appeared to weep and laugh at the same time. The end of both was peace.

7. JOHN TODD, a highly-respected merchant in Newcastle, was for upwards of half a century a member of the Orphan-House Society and congregation. By his fellow-townsmen he was held in high esteem as a man of unblemished character and strict business-integrity. He was connected with the Orphan-House Sabbath-school from its commencement; and, as an intelligent, zealous teacher and superintendent, greatly promoted its interests. By his kindly spirit and his Christian fidelity, he secured, as a class-leader, the esteem and affection of all entrusted to his care; the poorer members receiving his special attention, and not unfrequently participating in his bounty. For some years previous to the opening of the Brunswick-place chapel, the erection of which he had zealously promoted, he sustained with great fidelity and acceptance the office of chapel-steward in the former "House;" the choir of which was for some time under his supervision and guidance. He was a lover of good men. His house might truly be designated a "pilgrims' home;" the ministers of Methodism, when passing through the town, or when sojourning for a season in Newcastle, invariably found there a hospitable welcome. In a ripe old age Mr. Todd was "gathered to his fathers."

8. WALTER STONE, though moving in a far humbler sphere, was not in any wise less useful, or less esteemed. By occupation a shoemaker, he was for upwards of twenty years employed as the Orphan-House chapel-keeper; the duties of which station he faithfully performed. He was at the same time one of the most useful and influential local preachers in the Newcastle Circuit. Sound in his theological views; well versed in experimental religion; characterized, too, by apt and forcible illustrations of Divine truth, he was, as a preacher, highly esteemed. As a counsellor of the young, being always easy of access, and also in discharging the responsible duties of a class-leader, he greatly excelled. His class consisted solely of young men, who, profiting by the appropriate instructions weekly given, were generally acknowledged by the ministers of the Circuit, when renewing the quarterly tickets of the Society, to be, as a class, better grounded than many in the truths of doctrinal and experimental religion. Walter Stone was eminently "a good man." After lengthened and faithful service in the cause of the heavenly Master, he died as he had lived, in the exercise of joyous hope; "meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light."

9. JOHN DAGLISH, who entered into rest on the 30th of January, 1837, had been for upwards of twenty years a devoted member of the Methodist Society. Having sought with great fervency the pardoning mercy of God, he became a partaker of "the righteousness which is through faith," and, to the close of life, walked in consistency with his profession. In his business-pursuits he was characterized by "uprightness, order, and prudence," and thus became a valued member of civil as well as of religious society. He was an ardent and successful promoter of the system of vaccination, in support of which he wrote and practised largely; being supposed "to have himself vaccinated upwards of 17,000 cases, as well as to

have gratuitously supplied 19,000 charges of the vaccine virus to medical practitioners." He filled at different periods of his career nearly every important lay office in the Methodist Society; whilst, in promoting the interests of its several departments, he evidenced a spirit of genial and untiring zeal. A lingering illness preceded his removal to a happier world. Some of his last words were, "I feel my soul resting on a sure foundation: I am near the city of God."

10. CHARLES NEWBY WAWN, one of the most distinguished members of the Orphan-House Society, was by profession a surgeon-dentist. In the year 1816, under the superintendence of the late Rev. William Bramwell, he entered upon the responsibilities of a Methodist class-leader; his spiritual attainments being at that period of a high order. "When Mr. Wawn ascended the horizon," his biographer remarks, "there were but few men of his rank and influence who would submit to the brand of enthusiast and Methodist: but, with an apostolical heroism, he gloried in the cross; and to his piety and zeal we owe, among other kindred institutions, the formation of the Newcastle Bible and Tract Societies, and also of the Sunday-School Union, and the Auxiliary Church and Jewish Missionary Societies." Mr. Wawn is characterized as one whose "manners were highly polished and refined, his intelligence varied and extensive, his benevolence unsectarian and unbounded, and his whole life regulated by the pure precepts of our holy religion." As a public speaker, his style was rather "ornate, and marked by sweeping and accumulated epithet;" yet, from general testimony, he must be regarded as having been one of the most eloquent men of his day. He was also a good classic, and conversant with several of the languages and dialects of modern Europe. A painful mental disease led to his premature retirement from active pursuits; yet his death was eminently peaceful. On the 22d of May, 1840,

in the fifty-eighth year of his age, this gifted man

“Found the rest we toil to find,
Landed in the arms of God.”

11. JANE, afterwards MRS. THOMAS GIBSON, received her first religious impressions in the Orphan-House, when listening, at a very early age, to a sermon then addressed to young persons. In riper years she was found a deeply-attached member of the Wesleyan Society in Newcastle; and subsequently sustained for some years, with great acceptance, the office of class-leader. An interesting and instructive Memoir of this excellent lady, from the pen of the Rev. Francis A. West, is still extant. Mrs. G. is characterized as “a woman of great sense, and general information; possessing, in connexion with a sound judgment, a fervent yet practical piety, and a most benevolent spirit.” She was a diligent student of holy Scripture; implicitly submitting her own reason to its teaching. Into every scheme and purpose of benevolence, or for the extension of the kingdom of Christ, she entered with intense interest; her feminine virtues alone keeping her within a woman’s sphere. “The pleasures of the higher walks of literature, particularly of sacred literature, sometimes seemed to abstract her from the familiar conventionalities of life: yet she was always ready either to learn or teach; deeming knowledge the greatest luxury, and wisdom the highest good.” Her last affliction was severe, testing painfully the graces of her Christian character; yet was it graciously overruled as a means of weaning her from the world, and rendering her meet for home. On the 8th of December, 1835, in the thirty-ninth year of her age, she exchanged mortality for life. Some of her last words, uttered with significant emphasis, were, “All is well!”—words which the now sainted Montgomery expanded into the following beautiful epitaph:—

“Life, death, and judgment, time, eternity,
Exalted spirit! now are known to thee.

Life, thou hast proved a flow'ry, thorny way ;
Death, one dark moment, bursting into day ;
And judgment, mercy : since among the blest,
Thee, as His own, thy Saviour hath confest ;
Time and eternity thenceforth are one ;
Heaven's glory crowns what grace on earth begun.
Sweet were thy last faint accents, 'All is well !'
But how much better now thou may'st not tell ;
And yet, the best remains, when thou shalt meet
Thy loved and loving friends round Jesu's feet."

12. THOMAS STANLEY, a native of Alnwick, and grandson by the mother's side of the Rev. Robert Swan, one of the Methodist preachers of a former day, was early instructed in the principles of religious truth and duty. In his fifteenth year, he was placed as an apprentice in Newcastle-upon-Tyne ; where, attracted by the singing at the Orphan-House, and pleased with its whole arrangements, he regularly attended the services there held. Receiving in his association with the Society "a sense of the Divine favour, and the transforming influences of the holy Spirit," he was led with holy earnestness to "serve his generation by the will of God." At the early age of nineteen, "after taking part in other less public works of faith and love," he entered upon the important duty of "calling sinners to repentance ;" and, as a local preacher, laboured for thirty-eight years with fidelity, acceptance, and success. In his family, he was "a pattern of affection and piety." In discharging the duties of a class-leader, he was ever found affectionate, yet judicious and faithful. To the cause of God under the name of Methodism, he was devotedly attached ; well sustaining at different periods its most important offices. He died in peaceful triumph, August 27th, 1851, *ætat.* 58. By those who knew him, his name and memory are still held in high esteem. "The memory of the just is blessed."

13. MARGARET MORRISON was for many years a highly-esteemed and successful leader in connexion with the

Orphan-House Society; seldom having less than three important classes under her care. Ere reaching her twelfth year, she was left an orphan, having little or no opportunity of receiving evangelical instruction, save from a Methodist servant-girl,—Dixon by name,—who directed her youthful heart to Christ, and from whom she learned several Wesleyan hymns, which throughout a lengthened life were imprinted on her memory, and often yielded both instruction and comfort. She received her first ticket in 1804, from the Rev. William Myles, the earliest historian of Wesleyan Methodism: and, although in after life called to pass through many scenes of painful perplexity and sorrow, she held fast her integrity; the sufferings she endured enabling her more deeply to sympathize with others,—to comfort those in trouble, “by the comfort wherewith” she herself was “comforted of God.” “In age and feebleness extreme,” her mental energy far on the wane, this worthy woman, in her eighty-sixth year, on the 29th of April, 1861, passed—

“From a suffering church beneath,
To a reigning church above.”

14. RALPH WILSON, for many years the treasurer of the Orphan-House trustees, was born at Kilhope-burn, Weardale, in the year 1794. In early life the subject of Scriptural conversion, he subsequently sustained for upwards of forty years the offices of class-leader and local preacher. In his attachment to Methodism, and fidelity to its interests, he was unswerving. For a lengthened period, in addition to various Circuit-responsibilities, he held the position of treasurer of the Wesleyan Missionary Society for the Newcastle District. He was also a member of several important Connexional committees. His intimate acquaintance with the economy of Methodism rendered him a safe counsellor: in the influence thus exerted he was regarded, especially in his later years, as a “pillar”

in the Wesleyan church. By diligent attention to business, he rose to eminence as a tradesman; and the influence thus and otherwise gained was rendered tributary to the cause of God. While "diligent in business," he was "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." After an unbroken career of usefulness, he "ceased at once to work and live," on the 15th of December, 1860.

15. **ELIZABETH**, wife of **Mr. GEORGE BARGATE**,*—the senior trustee of the "Orphan-House charity,"—was born at Eastgate, Weardale, in the year 1780; just at the period when a most remarkable revival of the work of God had taken place in that beautiful vale. Her maiden name was Bainbridge,—a cognomen well known in the annals of northern Methodism. The kitchen of her father's house was at a very early period used as a Methodist preaching-place, and was so continued till the erection of the Eastgate chapel in 1825. Cuthbert and Mary Bainbridge, in whose house "the ark of God" had thus "rested," were honoured and repaid in the conversion of several of their children to God. In the homestead where her first breath had been drawn, Mrs. Bargate was born "a second time," being raised from her death of sin to newness of life in Christ,—thus in her eighteenth year becoming happy in God. On her marriage, in 1816, she removed to Newcastle; where, till the close of her earthly career, she was found a faithful follower of the Lord's Christ; sustaining in all the relations of life, as well as in all her intercourse with the church and the world, the Christian character. As she had been nursed in Methodism, its ministers and its people were, next to the volume of revealed truth, the objects of her warm attachment and

* Now an "old disciple;" having "a good report of all, and of the truth itself." For upwards of sixty years Mr. Bargate has been associated with the Methodist Society; and for two-thirds, at least, of that period has, in the offices of class-leader and local preacher, faithfully served the church of Christ.

regard. In "acts of faith and charity," and in an humble walk with God, her earthly pilgrimage reached its close. On the 13th of May, 1862, this "mother in Israel" fell asleep. Her last utterance was, "Glory to Jesus!"

These reminiscences of some of the numerous sainted dead, who once worshipped in this ancient "House," whilst interesting in themselves, pleasingly attest the truly evangelical tendency of its teaching and its services. Numbers also, subsequently attached to other sections of the Christian church, received their first religious impressions either in connexion with the worship of the Orphan-House, or in association with its Sabbath-school.*

After much anxious care, on the part of the Provisional Committee, to obtain the most approved plans for "the new Orphan-House schools," the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone took place amidst much rejoicing, on Wednesday, the 13th of May, 1857. The proceedings commenced by a public breakfast, held in the Central Exchange hotel, at which nearly three hundred ladies and gentlemen were present; Mr. Falconar, senior, occupying the chair. Interesting addresses were given by the Revs. Dr. Bruce (of the Scottish church), Messrs. Lawton, and Carter: and also by Messrs. Fenwick and Frost; the former of whom, a member of the Baptist church, and characterized by great catholicity of spirit, stated, that

* Richard Grainger, the founder of "the New-Town" of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, was early in life, if not a scholar, yet a teacher, in the Orphan-House Sabbath-school, and for many years was an active member of the Methodist Society. His widowed mother—a poor yet worthy woman—gained a livelihood as an "engrafter of stockings;" an occupation but little known in the present day. Mr. Grainger, "like all truly great men, never disowned his humble origin, but allowed his conduct through life to be the true index of his moral worth." It is an interesting fact, that the first set of tools which he possessed was presented to him by Mrs. William Smith, the step-daughter of John Wesley.

"he did not remember the time when there was not a Sunday-school at the Orphan-House, and he could speak with great distinctness to all events of a public character in Newcastle since the year 1792. To his certain knowledge there was a sort of Bible Society in the Orphan-House prior to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society: poor boys, who could not afford to purchase a copy of the Scriptures, were there supplied." Other interesting facts, illustrative of bygone days, were also given; after which a procession was formed in the following order:—

The building committee.

The architect and clerk-of-works.

The contractors.

The ministers of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Circuit.

The president of the Conference. The principal of the Normal Institution.

The ministers of the District.

The school-trustees.

Other lay friends.

Sunday-school children and teachers.

On reaching the ground, where a gallery had been erected for the accommodation of the ladies present, the service commenced by the children singing, with great sweetness, the hymn entitled "Hosanna to Jesus;" the Rev. Joseph Lawton, of Sunderland, engaged in prayer; appropriate selections of Scripture were read by the superintendent of the Circuit; a hymn,* composed by Benjamin Gough, Esq., of Mountfield, near Faversham, was then sung; and after addresses by the Rev. Robert Young, the president of the Conference, and Mr. Bargate, to whom had been assigned the duty of presenting the trowel, the stone was laid in due form by Mr. Falconar, the treasurer of the building-fund. Within the stone

* See Appendix G.

was placed a bottle, containing, in addition to certain coins of the realm, a copy of the Plan of the Newcastle Circuit, and of the "Northern Daily Express," published that morning; and also a document on parchment, of which the following is a copy:—

"ORPHAN-HOUSE WESLEYAN SCHOOLS,

"NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

"THE foundation-stone of these schools was laid this day (Wednesday), the thirteenth day of May, in the twentieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith, and in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven, on the exact site of the Old Orphan-House, built in 1742, by the late Reverend John Wesley, A.M.,

"By JOHN BRUNTON FALCONAR, ESQUIRE,

"Of Forres-villa, near Gateshead.

"WILLIAM BOTTERILL, ESQUIRE, of Hull, architect.

"*Old surviving trustees.*—John Beckington; John Nichol; George Bargate; Ralph Hodgson.

"*Continuing and new trustees.*—Mr. George Bargate; Mr. John Nichol; Mr. John Brunton Falconar, the elder; Mr. Ralph Wilson; Mr. William Stephenson; Mr. Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge; Mr. Robert Robson; Mr. John Ward; Mr. John Brunton Falconar, jun.; Mr. Matthew Moralee Youll; Mr. William Alexander Falconar; Mr. John George Fenwick; Mr. John Gilhespy; Mr. Joseph Hopper; Mr. Jacob Vickers; Mr. William Haswell Stephenson; Mr. Robert Curtice; Mr. Matthew Slee; Mr. William Pearson; Mr. Richard Burnand.

"*Secretary.*—John Brunton Falconar, the younger.

"*Ministers of the Circuit.*—The Rev. William Wood Stamp, chairman of the District; the Rev. William Henry

Taylor, secretary of the District; the Rev. George Bowden; the Rev. Samuel Jackson, and the Rev. Francis Neale, Supernumeraries.

“*Circuit-stewards.*—Emerson Muschamp Bainbridge, and John Ward.

“The Rev. Robert Young, president of the Wesleyan Conference; the Rev. John Hannah, D.D., secretary of the Wesleyan Conference; the Rev. John Scott, principal of the Wesleyan Normal Institution, Westminster, and chairman of the Wesleyan Education Committee; Thomas Emerson Headlam, Esquire, and George Ridley, Esquire, members of Parliament for the borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.”

The treasurer, in an eloquent and appropriate address, expressed his firm conviction, that the schools about to be erected would prove a most important addition to the scanty means as yet provided for the training of the young in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, his native town. He referred to the objects Mr. Wesley had in view in the erection of the Orphan-House, and the beneficial results which, during the lapse of one hundred and fifteen years, had followed; and strongly urged that a merely secular education—an education from which the great truths of religion and morality were excluded—could not be a suitable training for beings destined for immortality, a preparation for which could only be secured by the provisions of the Gospel.

The Rev. John Scott, the principal of the Normal Institution, Westminster, observed that “one who should look with only a cursory glance at our proceedings this day might be disposed to regard them as of trivial importance. When the foundation-stone of a place of worship is laid, every one attaches high consideration to the act. . . . But to be founding a school for a parcel of children, though in itself no bad thing, may appear to one who likes

bold schemes and lofty enterprises a thing to which no great importance can attach. But let this person who glances at us and our proceedings this day, before he turns away and gives his attention to something else, remember that children are the material of which men and women are formed, and that the formation, though not instantaneous, is really rapid; and let him hear us when we say, that our aim is to shape this material so as to leave upon the men and women traces through all after-life of what was done upon them in the school,—impressions which shall remain after this life, and be permanent: and then, if he be an intelligent observer, surely he will be disposed to ask, ‘What are these people going to do with their children during their formation into matured persons? In what mould do they propose to cast them? What is the permanent stamp which they intend to put upon them?’ At present we only observe, that this importance attaches to our act in laying the foundation-stone of this school. It will be built for four hundred scholars: when they have passed from under the care of those who shall have charge of the educational process, four hundred others will succeed, and in due time four hundred others; and so on. In the course of years, many hundreds will have received in this school some improvement, perhaps their very cast of mind and character, and the bent and direction of their whole life. Let it, however, be remarked, that the acts performed in houses built for Christian instruction and worship will be performed in these schools. God will be worshipped daily, His praises will be sung, and prayer offered to Him ‘in whose hand’ every one’s breath is, and ‘whose are all our ways;’ and no pains, I hope, will be spared, so to instruct the children in the knowledge of God, that the worship will be intelligent and reverent. God’s law will be read; for we shall diligently teach sound morals in this school. And we are not so dishonest as to borrow morals from the

holy Scriptures and not avow our obligation; which they must do who teach morals without the Bible. If these morals are good for anything, they must draw them from that source; and it is a miserable affectation and insincerity to disown their obligation, and teach good morals as their own sage discoveries. Neither are we so immoral as to teach moral precepts and obligation on human authority, and with mere human recommendations, where we can adduce the authority of the God of heaven, and, producing the Book, say, 'Thus saith the Lord.' We leave this folly to those who exclude the Bible from their schools, (if, indeed, such people build schools,) and we shall diligently instruct the children committed to our care in the law of God. Then we shall also carefully instruct them in the revelations of Christianity. It would surely be an act scarcely to be pardoned either by earth or heaven, were a church of Christ to set up schools, invite poor children to attend, employ teachers to instruct them, and tell them nothing of the Saviour who came from heaven for their salvation, nor be at any pains to explain to them their need of His merciful interposition. In setting up these schools we very explicitly declare that we shall strenuously set ourselves to instruct the children in the doctrines of salvation. With such teaching, by duly-qualified teachers, we confidently hope that religious impressions will be made: we anticipate that the school will act beneficially on the congregation and the church, serving to augment them both. But we do not calculate upon augmenting exclusively our own congregation and church. When a child or young person, by God's blessing upon our school-teaching, becomes religious, we are quite willing that he shall worship in the congregation of his parents' church. If the parents belong to no church, or attend no place of worship, we should certainly deem it right and fair to prove our own sincerity of belief and conviction that we have found the right and safe way to heaven,

by asking him to join us—a Christian people bent upon attaining a happy hereafter. With this attention to what we regard as the prime object of youthful instruction and training, we hope to pay such attention to all secular teaching as will make the children, if their parents will allow them to remain at school long enough; good scholars,—to turn out scholars of whom no managing committee nor patrons, any more than the teachers, need be ashamed. Such results have followed the establishment of similar Wesleyan schools throughout the country; and if teachers are obtained from Westminster, they will have been instructed with the same assiduity, and trained to teach with the same care, as those who in other schools have been successful. I hope there is a glorious future history for the schools to be here erected; that the good produced will compare favourably with all the good which has hitherto been effected on this spot, and of which we have this day been reminded by our friends, in those highly-interesting recollections of the past."

The National Anthem was then sung by the large multitude assembled, and the proceedings at the stone terminated. In the evening a public meeting was held in the Brunswick-place chapel; Mr. Ralph Wilson occupying the chair. The report of the Building Committee was read; and the meeting was addressed by the Revs. Messrs. Young and Scott, with Messrs. J. B. Alexander, E. M. Bainbridge, J. B. Falconar, jun., and others.

The architectural character of the Orphan-House schools is seen in the woodcut-illustration now given. The shops, secured to the chapel-trustees, face the public street. The front of the school, standing back from the street about thirteen yards, and hence, in part, necessarily excluded from the view, is of red stock brick with stone dressings, having in the centre a beautifully-executed entrance-portico and clock-canopy. On the ground-floor is an entrance-lobby, giving access to the infants' school-

room; from which also a passage leads to the playground, &c., behind. The room is forty-five feet by thirty, and in height seventeen feet, with a spacious class-room adjoining. From the entrance-lobby, to the left, a stone staircase, of easy ascent and ample width, conducts to the upper floor, on which is the junior mixed school-room, being six feet longer than the one below, and in height nineteen feet; opening from which, on one side, is a class-room, thirty feet by twelve, and on the other, a covered corridor, leading to the girls' industrial-room, erected over part of the playground behind. A separate staircase to the upper rooms, entering from the playground, is also provided. The superficial area of the school and class rooms is 3,915 square feet. The whole of the buildings are of the most substantial and durable character; whilst in the arrangements for lighting and ventilation, and in the appropriation of the limited space at command, so as to secure the requisite amount of accommodation, in accordance with the requirements of the Committee of Council on Education, the architect, Mr. Botterill, of Hull, has evinced great tact and skill.*

The total expenditure† involved in the completion of this school and chapel effort was upwards of £7,000. Towards the erection of the school and teacher's house, the sum of £1,172 was granted by the Committee of

* On this point, the testimony of the Rev. Michael C. Taylor, the secretary of the Wesleyan Education Committee, (as given at the opening of the schools,) is highly satisfactory. "His own personal judgment," he observed, "was worth little; but his judgment was not strictly personal. He had the opportunity of seeing many schools, and of seeing the plans of many more; but he had not yet met with plans which, having regard to the limited extent of the site, were better than these, and he did not call to mind any so good. With regard to the convenience for the work of teaching, in their everyday fitness and convenience, he had been unable to discover a defect."

† For balance-sheet of treasurer, and list of subscriptions, see Appendix H.



ORPHAN-HOUSE WESLEYAN SCHOOLS,

NORTHUMBERLAND - STREET,

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

FOUNDATION-STONE LAID MAY 13, 1857.

SCHOOLS OPENED JAN. 11, 1858.

Council on Education. In addition to the subscriptions of the promoters, some of whom gave in princely fashion, most efficient aid was rendered by the ladies of Newcastle and its neighbourhood, in the proceeds of a bazaar held by them in the spring of 1856; a bazaar thus characterized in the "Watchman" of that period:—"The *tout ensemble* was exceedingly imposing, and nothing could surpass the elegant designs, the exquisite workmanship, and the great beauty, which in rich profusion met the eye wherever it roamed. It appeared as though the ladies had entered into a formal engagement to produce all that the utmost ingenuity, artistic skill, and unwearied energy of the fairer sex could by possibility accomplish."* The balance-sheet of the treasurer, Mrs. G. T. Gibson, presented the *gross* receipts of the bazaar,—inclusive of the supplementary sale of articles that were left,—as £1,842. 18s. 2d.; to which must be added, as interest on moneys deposited for a season in the bank, £75. 19s. 8d.; thus giving a total of £1,918. 17s. 10d.,—a result unparalleled in the records of bazaars held in the north of England, and rarely, if ever, surpassed by any hitherto held within the pale of Methodism. After deducting expenses of every kind, a *net* sum of £1,784. 11s. 3d. was appropriated to the important objects then happily secured. Whatever evils may have been occasionally witnessed in connexion with similar efforts elsewhere, the bazaar in Newcastle was productive of at least two important results;—the bringing into friendly association, and united cheerful effort, *all classes* of the Methodist community; and also the excitement of a spirit of buoyancy, and of renewed confidence in the system of Wesleyanism, which by recent events had been greatly checked. Methodism in Newcastle had been looked upon as crippled in its energies and its resources; as presenting symptoms of sickliness, if not of certain decline.

* For detailed account of this extraordinary bazaar-effort, see Appendix I.

It was now felt by everyone, that, if not invested with a new moral power, Methodism still retained an unimpaired vitality.

The schools were opened under very auspicious circumstances, on Monday, January 11th, 1858, when one hundred and twenty-six children were at once enrolled as scholars. Sermons, in connexion with the opening of the schools, were preached by the Rev. Messrs. Young, Stamp, S. D. Waddy, Tyerman, Punshon, and Coley. A public meeting was also held in Brunswick-place chapel on the evening of Wednesday, January 13th, at which the Rev. Michael C. Taylor was present, and gave an interesting *resumé* of the mode of instruction pursued in the day-schools of the Wesleyan body.

The number of scholars on the roll of the Orphan-House schools in the year 1862 was, in the upper school, three hundred and thirty, and in the lower, or infants'-school, one hundred and eighty-eight; the scholars in actual attendance being two hundred and seventy-five in the former, and one hundred and thirty-six in the latter. To the great efficiency of Mr. Shaw and Miss Walker, under whose care the schools have, from their commencement, been placed, the committee have continuously borne willing and honourable testimony. Cheered by the successes of the past, the promoters of this important undertaking confidently indulge the hope, that, under the fostering care of the great Head of the church, "the Orphan-House schools" may be the means of imparting to many thousands of children the benefits both of a secular and a religious training; so that, however great may have been the glory of the former "House," it may in this respect have "no glory, by reason of the glory" of the latter, "that excelleth."

The review thus taken of the rise and progress of Wesleyan Methodism in Newcastle and its vicinity,

together with the singular fortunes of the Orphan-House (Wesley's favourite domicile), is highly suggestive. In the unlooked-for establishment of large and flourishing Societies, where previously "the prince of this world" held undisputed sway; as well as in the severely-contested steps by which their ecclesiastical rights and privileges were gained, the thoughtful observer will recognise the interposition and guidance of a more than human hand. The benefits conferred by Methodism on the colliery-districts of the north have been of vast importance; not only in the establishment of social order and domestic peace where habits of barbarism had unhappily obtained, but in the conversion of multitudes,—

" Wild as the untaught Indian's brood,"—

from sin to holiness, and "from the power of Satan unto God."

Nor has the mission of Wesleyan Methodism ceased. Its efforts, as an evangelizing, witnessing church, are still needed: and, whilst its ministers and people steadfastly adhere to that system of Christian doctrine and godly discipline which has been so markedly owned of God; whilst the same simplicity of purpose, and holy zeal, and entire devotedness to their great work, which characterized the fathers of our Connexion, are maintained; Wesleyan Methodism will continue to be one of the most successful instrumentalities in extending to earth's remotest bounds the kingdom of our God and Saviour.

APPENDIX.

A.—PAGE 21.

COPY OF THE TRUST-DEED OF MR. WESLEY'S
ORPHAN-HOUSE.

THIS INDENTURE, made the fifth day of March, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our sovereign lord, George the Second, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. ; and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-five ; BETWEEN John Wesley, clerk, Fellow of Lincoln College, in the university of Oxford, of the one part ; and Henry Jackson, of the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the county of the same town, weaver ; William Macford,* of the same town, cornfactor ; John Nelson, of Birstol,† in the county of York, mason ; John Haughton, of Chinley-End, in the county of Derby, weaver ; Thomas Richards, late of Trinity College, in the university of Oxford aforesaid, gentleman ; Jonathan Reeves, late of the city of Bristol, baker ; and Henry Thornton, of Gray's-Inn, in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, of the other part ; WITNESSETH, that for the settling and conveying the messuage, hereditaments, and premises hereinafter mentioned, to be granted upon such trusts, and for such pious and charitable ends and purposes, as are hereinafter thereof mentioned or expressed ; AND in consideration of the sum of five shillings apiece of lawful money of Great Britain, by the said Henry Jackson, William Macford, John Nelson, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, Jonathan Reeves, and Henry Thornton, to the said John Wesley, before the sealing and delivery hereof, well and truly paid, the receipt whereof the said John Wesley doth hereby acknowledge ; and for diverse other good considerations him thereunto moving ; he, the said John Wesley,

* Usually spelt Mackford.

† Birstol.

HATH granted, bargained, and sold, AND by these presents DOTH grant, bargain, and sell, unto the said Henry Jackson, William Macford, John Nelson, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, Jonathan Reeves, and Henry Thornton, ALL THAT lately-erected messuage, house, or tenement, with the yard and garden thereunto belonging and adjoining, of him the said John Wesley, situate, standing, and being without Pilgrim-street Gate, within the county of the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid, commonly called or known by the name of THE ORPHAN-HOUSE, and now in the said John Wesley's own occupation, abutting on the street called Pilgrim-street without the Gate, on the north-east; on a yard and house lately belonging to Phillis Gibon and others, on the north-west; on a garden belonging to John Stephenson, Esquire, on the south-west, and a piece of ground or passage belonging to the said John Stephenson, on the south-east; TOGETHER with all edifices, buildings, stables, orchards, yards, garths, gardens, lands, grounds, ways, waters, watercourses, easements, liberties, privileges, hereditaments, and appurtenances whataeover to the said premises hereby granted, or any part thereof belonging, or in anywise appertaining, or therewith accepted, reputed, taken, or known as part, parcel, or member thereof, or as belonging thereunto, and the reversion and reversions, remainder and remainders, rents and profits thereof, and all the estate, right, title, interest in law and equity, inheritance, use, trust, property, possession, claim, and demand whatsoever, of him the said John Wesley of, in, and to the same; to HAVE AND TO HOLD the said messuage, house, or tenement, and premises, hereby granted, bargained, and sold, or mentioned or intended so to be, to the said Henry Jackson, William Macford, John Nelson, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, Jonathan Reeves, and Henry Thornton, their heirs and assigns, to the use of the said Henry Jackson, William Macford, John Nelson, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, Jonathan Reeves, and Henry Thornton, their heirs and assigns for ever: NEVERTHELESS, upon the trusts, and for the purposes hereinafter mentioned or expressed; (that is to say)—UPON SPECIAL TRUST and confidence, and to the intent that they, and the survivors and survivor of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, do and shall permit and suffer the said John Wesley and such other person and persons as he shall for that purpose from time to time nominate or appoint, from time to time and at all times during his life, at his will and pleasure, to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said premises as he, the said John Wesley, hath heretofore done; and that he and such person or persons as he shall so nominate or appoint, shall and may therein preach and expound God's holy

word ; And from and after his decease, UPON FARTHER TRUST and confidence, and to the intent that the said trustees, and the survivors and survivor of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, do and shall permit and suffer Charles Wesley, clerk, brother of the said John Wesley, and such other person or persons as the said Charles Wesley shall, for that purpose, from time to time nominate or appoint in like manner during his life, to have, use, and enjoy the said premises for the like purposes as aforesaid ; And from and after the decease of the survivor of them, the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley, THEN, UPON FARTHER TRUST and confidence, and to the intent that the said Henry Jackson, William Macford, John Nelson, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, Jonathan Reeves, and Henry Thornton, or the major part of them, or the survivors or survivor of them, and the major part of the trustees of the said house and premises for the time being, according to the true intent and meaning of these presents, do and shall, from time to time and at all times for ever thereafter, monthly or oftener, at their discretion, nominate and appoint one or more fit person or persons to preach and expound God's holy word in the said House, in the same manner, as near as may be, as God's holy word is now preached and expounded there : AND UPON FARTHER TRUST and confidence, and to the intent that the school to be taught in part of the said house and premises from the time of the institution thereof, shall for ever be, and continue, and be kept up, and shall consist of one master and one mistress, and such forty poor children as the said John Wesley, during his life, and after his decease the said Charles Wesley, and after the decease of the survivor of them, then as the said trustees, or the major part of them, or the major part of the trustees for the time being, shall from time to time respectively appoint ; And that such of them the said poor children being boys, shall be committed solely to the care of such master, and be by him taught and instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic ; and that such other of them the said children as shall be girls shall be under the sole care and instruction of such mistress, and by her taught reading, writing, and needlework ; for such and so long time respectively as the said John Wesley during his life, and after his decease the said Charles Wesley, and after the decease of the survivor of them, the said trustees, or the major part of them, or the major part of the trustees for the time being, shall respectively think meet and convenient ; And that they, the said master and mistress and scholars, so to be appointed as aforesaid, and each of them respectively, shall from time to time submit to and be governed by the rules, orders, and constitutions to be made and ordained by the said John Wesley, and from time to time to be made

and ordained by the trustees, or the major part of them, for the good order and government of the said school: AND UPON FARTHER TRUST and confidence, and to the intent that when, and as often as, the said trustees, or any of them, or any of the trustees for the time being, shall happen to die, or shall remove their or his place or places of abode or residence for the space of forty miles, or more, from the said House, (other than the said trustees hereinbefore mentioned, and hereby appointed,) or shall resign or give up his or their place or places, station or stations, of such trustee or trustees, that then and so often, so soon afterwards as conveniently may be, the rest of the said trustees for the time being do, shall, and may elect and choose other fit person or persons to be trustee or trustees, to fill up such vacancies, and keep up the number of seven trustees; And that when and so often as the number of trustees in whom the legal estate and interest of and in the said house and premises for the time being shall be vested, shall be reduced to the number of three or less, that then and so often, as soon as conveniently may be, after the whole number of the trustees shall be filled up and made seven, the trustees, or trustee, in whom the legal estate shall be, shall and do convey and assure the said House and premises to the use of themselves or himself, and the rest of the said trustees for the time being, and all their heirs for ever, by good and sufficient conveyances and assurances in the law, upon the same trusts and for the like purposes as is and are hereinbefore declared; and so from time to time for ever hereafter, as often as the said trustees shall be reduced to the number of three, or any less number; whereby the said trusts thereof may have a perpetual duration and continuance, and may not come to and vest in the heirs of any surviving trustee: PROVIDED always, nevertheless, and it is hereby declared, that the said John Wesley alone during his life, and after his decease the said Charles Wesley in like manner alone during his life, when and so often as any vacancy shall happen of any master or mistress of the said school so to be appointed as aforesaid, shall have the sole nomination and appointment respectively for the supplying such vacancy from time to time during their respective lives as aforesaid, anything herein contained to the contrary thereof notwithstanding: PROVIDED also, that every such preacher or minister, from time to time to be appointed as aforesaid, so long as he shall continue in his said office shall preach twice every day, to wit, in the morning, and again in the evening, in or at the House aforesaid, as has been usual and customary to be done: PROVIDED also, that the master and mistress respectively of the said school, to be appointed as aforesaid, for the time being, shall and

may be displaced and removed by the said John Wesley during his life at his will and pleasure, and after his death by the said Charles Wesley, at his will and pleasure, and after the death of the survivor of them the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley, by the said trustees for the time being, or the major part of them, at their will and pleasure; And that upon every such vacancy so made, or any other vacancy, a new nomination or appointment of such master or mistress shall be made, according to the true intent and meaning of these presents, on or before the thirtieth day next after such vacancy or vacancies respectively shall so happen, exclusive of the day of such vacancy or vacancies, and every such nomination, appointment, or election respectively shall be made and had in the said messuage or tenement hereby granted between the hours of nine and twelve in the forenoon, anything herein contained to the contrary thereof, in any wise, notwithstanding. In witness whereof the said John Wesley hath hereunto set his hand and seal the day and year first above written.

JOHN WESLEY.

Endorsement: Sealed and delivered (being first duly stamp'd) in the presence of
W. BRIGGS,
JOHN WEBB,
EDWARD STOLESBURY.

Endorsement: 5th March, 1745.

The Reverend Mr. John Wesley's conveyance of his House, &c., in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to trustees, for charitable uses.

Note on back of Deed.

The year 1746 began 25th March.

B.—PAGE 30.

THE RULES OF THE SOCIETY, AS FIRST PUBLISHED BY MR. WESLEY:
WITH A PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO ARE CONVINCED OF SIN.

THE
NATURE, DESIGN, AND GENERAL RULES
OF THE
UNITED SOCIETIES,
IN
LONDON, BRISTOL, KING'S-WOOD, AND NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Printed by JOHN GOODING, on the *Side*.

[Price One Penny.]

M.DCC.XLIII.

RULES, &c., OF THE UNITED SOCIETIES.

1. In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in *London*, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work, I appointed a day when they might all come together; which, from thenceforward, they did every week, namely, on *Thursday*, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased daily,) I gave those advices, from time to time, which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.
2. This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first at *London*, and then in other places. Such a Society is no other than "*a company of*

men having the form, and seeking the power, of godliness; united, in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

3. That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each Society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every class; one of whom is styled *the Leader*. It is his business,

i. To see each person in his class once a week, at the least; in order

To receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor;

To inquire how their souls prosper;

To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require.

ii. To meet the Minister and the Stewards of the Society once a week; in order

• To pay in to the Stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding;

To show their account of what each person has contributed; and

To inform the Minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved.

4. There is only one condition previously required in those who desire admission into these Societies, *a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins*. But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First, By doing no harm; by avoiding evil in every kind; especially that which is most generally practised. Such is,

The taking the name of God in vain:

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling:

Drunkenness; *buying or selling spirituous liquors*; or *drinking them* (unless in cases of extreme necessity):

Fighting, quarrelling, brawling; *going to law*; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the *using many words* in buying or selling:

The *buying or selling uncustomed goods*:

The *giving or taking things on usury*:

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation:

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us:

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as,

The putting on of gold, or costly apparel:

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus:

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God:

Softness, and needless self-indulgence:

Laying up treasures upon earth.

5. It is expected of all who continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly, By doing good; by being, in every kind, merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick, or in prison:

To their souls, by instructing, *reproving*, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that "we are not to do good unless *our heart be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially, to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and that so much the more because the world will love its own, and them only.

By all possible *diligence and frugality*, that the Gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race that is set before them; *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily*; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should *say all manner of evil of them falsely, for their Lord's sake.*

6. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly, By attending upon all the ordinances of God: such are,

The public worship of God;

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded;

The supper of the Lord;

Private prayer;

Searching the Scriptures; and,

Fasting, or abstinence.

7. These are the General Rules of our Societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in His written word; the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice: and all these we know His Spirit writes on every truly-awakened heart. If there be any

among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto him who watches over that soul, as one that must give account. I will admonish him of the error of his ways. I will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

JOHN WESLEY.

February 23, 1742-3.

A PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO ARE CONVINCED OF SIN.

- 1 O most compassionate High Priest,
Full of all grace we know Thou art;
Faith puts its hand upon Thy breast,
And feels beneath Thy panting heart.
- 2 Thy panting heart for sinners bleeds;
Thy mercies and compassions move;
Thy groaning Spirit intercedes,
And yearn the bowels of Thy love.
- 3 Hear then the pleading Spirit's prayer,
(The Spirit's will to Thee is known,)
For all who now Thy sufferings share,
And still for full redemption groan:
- 4 Poor tempted souls, with tempests toss'd,
And strangers to a moment's peace;
Disconsolate, afflicted, lost,
Lost in a howling wilderness:
- 5 Torn with an endless war within,
Vex'd with the flesh and spirit's strife;
And struggling in the toils of sin,
And agonizing into life.
- 6 O let the pris'ners' mournful cries
As incense in Thy sight appear;
Their humble wailings pierce the skies,
If haply they may feel Thee near!
- 7 The captive exiles make their moans,
From sin impatient to be free;
Call home, call home Thy banish'd ones!
Lead captive their captivity!

- 8 Show them the blood that bought their peace,
The anchor of their steadfast hope!
And bid their guilty terrors cease,
And bring the ransom'd pris'ners up.
- 9 Out of the deep regard their cries;
The fallen raise, the mourners cheer;
O Sun of righteousness, arise,
And scatter all their doubt and fear!
- 10 Pity the day of feeble things;
O gather ev'ry halting soul;
And drop salvation from Thy wings,
And make the contrite sinner whole.
- 11 Stand by them in the fiery hour;
Their feebleness of mind defend;
And in their weakness show Thy power,
And make them patient to the end.
- 12 O satisfy their soul in drought;
Give them Thy saving health to see;
And let Thy mercy find them out;
And let Thy mercy reach to me!
- 13 Hast Thou the work of grace begun,
And brought them to the birth in vain?
O let Thy children see the sun!
Let all their souls be born again.
- 14 Relieve the souls whose cross we bear,
For whom Thy suff'ring members mourn;
Answer our faith's effectual prayer;
Bid ev'ry struggling child be born.
- 15 Hark, how Thy turtle-dove complains,
And see us weep for Sion's woe!
Pity Thy suff'ring people's pains;
Avenge us of our inbred foe!
- 16 Whom Thou hast bound, O Lord, expel,
And take his armour all away;
The man of sin, the child of hell,
The devil in our nature slay.

17 Him and his works at once destroy;
 The *being* of all sin erase:
 And turn our mourning into joy;
 And clothe us with the robes of praise.

18 Then, when our suff'rings all are past,
 O let us pure and perfect be!
 And gain our calling's prize at last,
 For ever sanctified in Thee.

C.—PAGE 53.

THE Poem referred to, page 53, is thus prefaced by Mr. Wesley:—
 “A short account of the whole I drew up, a few days after, in the following lines, in riding between Leeds and Newcastle.”

In the copy published by Mr. Moore,* it is headed,

“REFLECTIONS UPON PAST PROVIDENCES:

“OCTOBER, 1749.”

O LORD! I bow my sinful head!
 Righteous are all Thy ways with man!
 Yet suffer me with Thee to plead,
 With lowly reverence to complain;
 With deep, unuttered grief to groan:
 Oh! what is this that Thou hast done?

2.

Oft, as through giddy youth I roved,
 And danced along the flowery way,
 By chance, or thoughtless passion moved,
 An easy, unsuspecting prey
 I fell, while Love's envenomed dart
 Thrilled through my veins, and tore my heart.

* In Mr. Moore's copy, verses 15, 16, 17, and 18, referring to the scenes of sore temptation through which Grace Murray passed, are wanting. Several verbal discrepancies are also found.

3.

At length, by sad experience taught,
 Firm I shook off the abject yoke;
 Abhorred his sweetly-poisonous draught,
 Through all his wily fetters broke;
 Fixed my desires on things above,
 And languished for celestial love.

4.

Borne on the wings of sacred hope,
 Long had I soared, and spurned the ground;
 When, panting for the mountain-top,
 My soul a kindred spirit found;
 By Heaven entrusted to my care,
 The daughter of my faith and prayer.

5.

In early dawn of life, serene,
 Mild, sweet, and tender was her mood;
 Her pleasing form spoke all within
 Soft, and compassionately good;
 Listening to every wretch's care,
 Mixing with each her friendly tear.

6.

In dawn of life, to feed the poor,
 Glad she her little all bestowed;
 Wise to lay up a better store,
 And hastening to be rich in God;
 God, whom she sought with early care,
 With reverence and with lowly fear.

7.

Ere twice four years passed o'er her head,
 Her infant breast with love He filled,
 His gracious, glorious name revealed;
 Till, sweetly forced her heart to yield,
 She groan'd t'ascend heaven's high abode,
 To die into the arms of God.

8.

Yet, warm with youth and beauty's pride,
 Soon was her heedless soul betrayed ;
 From heaven her footsteps turned aside ;
 O'er pleasure's flowery plains she strayed ;
 Fondly the toys of earth she sought,
 And God was not in all her thought.

9.

Not long. A messenger she saw,
 Sent forth glad tidings to proclaim ;
 She heard with joy and wondering awe
 His cry, " Sinners, behold the Lamb ! "
 His eye her inmost nature shook ;
 His word her heart in pieces broke.

10.

Her bosom heaved with labouring sighs,
 And groaned th' unutterable prayer ;
 As rivers, from her streaming eyes
 Fast flowed the never-ceasing tear,
 Till Jesus spake, " Thy mourning's o'er !
 Believe, rejoice, and weep no more."

11.

She heard : pure love her soul o'erflowed ;
 Sorrow and sighing fled away ;
 With sacred zeal her spirit glowed,
 Panting His every word t' obey ;
 Her faith by plenteous fruits she showed,
 And all her works were wrought in God.

12.

Nor works alone her faith approved :
 Soon in affliction's furnace tried,
 By him whom next to heaven she loved,
 As silver seven times purified,
 Shone midst the flames her constant mind,
 Emerged, and left its dross behind.

13.

When death in freshest strength of years
 Her much-loved friend tore from her breast,
 Awhile she poured her plaints and tears ;
 But, quickly turning to her rest,
 "Thy will be done!" she meekly cried,
 "Suffice, for me the Saviour died."

14.

Then first I viewed with fixed regard
 Her artless tears in silence flow ;
 "For thee are better things prepared,"
 I said: "go forth with Jesus, go :
 My Master's peace be on thy soul,
 Till perfect love shall make thee whole."

15.

But, oh ! what trials are in store
 For those whom God delights to bless !
 Abandoned soon to Satan's power,
 Sifted as wheat ; from the abyss,
 The lowest deep, she groaned aloud,
 "Where is my joy, my hope, my God ?"

16.

In chains of horrid darkness bound,
 Torn by the dogs of hell, she lay ;
 By fear and sin encompassed round,
 Anguish, and pain, and huge dismay ;
 Till the loud, bitter cry out-broke,
 "My God ! why hast Thou me forsook ?"

17.

Yet, bowing down her fainting head,
 And sinking to the gulf beneath,
 She flew to every sinner's aid,
 To snatch him from the sinner's death :
 "Though justly I am lost," she cried,
 "Live thou ! for thee the Saviour died."

18.

But, when again His glory shone,
 When God anew unveiled His face ;
 What heavenly zeal, what love unknown,
 What strong, unuttered tenderness !
 For every soul her heart o'erflowed :
 What longing to be spent for God !

19.

I saw her run with wingèd speed,
 In works of faith and labouring love ;
 I saw her glorious toil succeed,
 And showers of blessing from above
 Crowning her warm effectual prayer ;
 And glorified my God in her.

20.

Yet, while to all her tender mind
 In streams of pure affection flowed,
 To one, by ties peculiar joined,
 One, only less beloved than God,
 " Myself," she said, " my soul I owe,
 My guardian angel here below."

21.

From heaven the grateful ardour came,
 Pure from the dross of low desire ;
 Well pleased, I marked the guiltless flame,
 Nor dared to damp the sacred fire ;
 Heaven's choicest gift on man bestowed,
 Strengthening our hearts and hands in God.

22.

'Twas now I bowed my aching head,
 While sickness shook the house of clay ;
 Duteous, she ran with humble speed,
 Love's tenderest offices to pay ;
 To ease my pain, to soothe my care,
 To uphold my feeble hands in prayer.

23.

Amazed, I cried, "Surely for me
 A help prepared of heaven thou art !
 Thankful, I take the cup from Thee,
 O Lord ! nor aught on earth shall part
 The souls whom Thou hast joined above,
 In lasting bonds of sacred love."

24.

Abashed, she spake, "Oh ! what is this,
 Far above all my boldest hope !
 Can God, beyond my utmost wish,
 Thus lift His worthless handmaid up ?
 This only could my soul desire,
 This only (had I dared) require."

25.

From that glad hour, with growing love,
 Heaven's latest, dearest gift I viewed ;
 While, pleased each moment to improve,
 We urged our way with strength renewed ;
 Our one desire, our common aim,
 To extol our gracious Master's name.

26.

Companions now in weal and woe,
 No power on earth could us divide ;
 Nor summer's heat, nor wintry snow,
 Could tear my partner from my side ;
 Nor toil, nor weariness, nor pain,
 Nor horrors of the angry main.

27.

Oft, (though as yet the nuptial tie
 Was not,) clasping her hand in mine,
 "What force," she said, "beneath the sky,
 Can now our well-knit souls disjoin ?
 With thee I'd go to India's coast,
 To worlds in distant oceans lost."

28.

Such was the friend, than life more dear,
Whom in one luckless, baleful hour,
For ever mentioned with a tear,)
The tempest's unresisted power
(Oh, the unutterable smart !)
Tore from my inly-bleeding heart.

29.

Unsearchable Thy judgments are,
O Lord ! a bottomless abyss ;
Yet sure, Thy love, Thy guardian care,
O'er all Thy works extended is :
Oh ! why didst Thou the blessing send ?
Or, why thus snatch away my friend ?

30.

What Thou hast done I know not now ;
Suffice I shall hereafter know :
Beneath Thy chastening hand I bow ;
That still I live to Thee I owe :
Oh, teach Thy deeply-humbled son
To say, "Father, Thy will be done !"

31.

Teach me, from every pleasing snare,
To keep the issues of my heart :
Be Thou my love, my joy, my fear ;
Thou my eternal portion art :
Be Thou my never-failing Friend,
And love, oh, love me to the end !

D.—PAGE 102.

**NAMES OF MINISTERS SUCCESSIVELY APPOINTED TO
THE NEWCASTLE CIRCUIT,**

TOGETHER WITH THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN SOCIETY,
AS PUBLISHED ANNUALLY IN THE MINUTES OF CONFERENCE.

The letters C.D. denote that the Minister was for that year the Chairman of the Newcastle District.

N.B. In addition to the frequent visits of the Wealeys, Jonathan Reeves and Thomas Meyrick laboured in Newcastle and its vicinity, in the year 1743 ; John Nelson and William Briggs, in 1744 ; John Downes, in 1749 ; Jonathan Maakew and Thomas Mitchell, in 1752 ; and in the intervening years, Messrs. Cownley, Lee, Bennet, Thomas Olivers, and others.

Year.	Names of Ministers.	No. in Society.
1753*	Christopher Hopper, John Hampson, Jonathan Catlow, Jacob Rowell	
1755*	Christopher Hopper, James Massiott, Matthew Lowes, James Wild, John Turnough	
1758*	Christopher Hopper, Alexander Mather, Jacob Rowell, Lawrence Coughlan	
1765	Joseph Cownley, Christopher Hopper, Matthew Lowes, Moseley Cheek	
1766	Joseph Cownley, Christopher Hopper, John Oliver, Matthew Lowes	1804
1767	James Oddie, Joseph Cownley, William Ellis, William Darney ; Christopher Hopper, Supernumerary	1837

* These appointments are taken from MS. memoranda of the Conferences then held ; no Conferential record of Stations being published till the year 1765 ; after which period the numbers in Society are annually reported.

Year.	Names of Ministers.	Nos. in Society.
1768	Joseph Cownley, James Oddie, Supernumerary, Matthew Lowes, Joseph Thompson	1910
1769	Joseph Cownley, John Murlin, John Nelson, Thomas Hanby ; James Oddie, Supernumerary.....	1924
1770	Peter Jaco, Joseph Cownley, Thomas Hanby, Matthew Lowes, Thomas Tennant.....	1862
1771	Peter Jaco, William Thompson, Thomas Simpson, Joseph Cownley	1747
1772	Christopher Hopper, Jacob Rowell, Joseph Benson, Thomas Simpson	1747
1773	Christopher Hopper, James Hudson, Robert Swan, William Eels	1716
1774	William Thompson, John Broadbent, George Wadsworth, Thomas Tennant.....	1784
1775	William Thompson, Robert Empringham, Joseph Benson, Joseph Moore.....	1805
1776	Benjamin Rhodes, Joseph Benson, J. W., James Barry	1908
1777*	John Crook, John Leech, Michael Moorhouse	1915
1778	William Thompson, Jacob Rowell, Joseph Thompson, William Eels	1887
1779	William Thompson, John Watson, sen., Stephen Proctor, William Thom	1890
1780	William Hunter, William Collins, Benjamin Rhodes, Thomas Brisco	1944
1781	Duncan Wright, William Hunter, Edward Jackson, Thomas Ellis	1786
1782†	Duncan M' Allum, Alexander M' Nab, Thomas Ellis, John Pritchard	2020
1783	Thomas Dixon, Christopher Hopper, William Boothby	1020
1784	Jeremiah Brettell, George Snowden, John Beanland ...	970
1785	George Snowden, William Simpson, Andrew Inglis.....	1020
1786	Andrew Inglis, Joseph Saunderson, William Percival ...	1063
1787	James Wood, William Thom, Thomas Wride	1093
1788	Peter Mill, Joseph Thompson, John Stamp	1100
1789‡	Charles Atmore, John Ogilvie	1000
1790	Charles Atmore, John Brettell ; Joseph Cownley, Supernumerary	700

* Alnwick and places adjacent are for one year formed into a separate Circuit.

† Sunderland is this year separated from Newcastle, and, with places adjoining, constituted a separate Circuit.

Alnwick again becomes the head of a Circuit.

Year.	Names of Ministers.	Nos. in Society.
1791	John Gaulter, Alexander Kilham; Joseph Cownley, Supernumerary	780
1792	John Gaulter, Samuel Botts; Joseph Cownley, Supernumerary	800
1793	Henry Taylor, John Peacock	800
1794	Henry Taylor, John Kershaw	740
1795	Robert Johnson, Richard Condy	800
1796	Robert Johnson, Richard Condy	860
1797	Zechariah Yewdall, James Bogie	846
1798	Zechariah Yewdall, James Bogie	830
1799	Jonathan Brown, John Stamp	900
1800	Jonathan Brown, Matthew Lumb, Philip Hardcastle ...	920
1801	Matthew Lumb, John Doncaster, John Hudson	940
1802	Miles Martindale, c.d., John Hudson, and one more ...	1150
1803	Miles Martindale, c.d., William Fenwick, William Gilpin	1240
1804	William Myles, c.d., John Braithwaite, William Gilpin	1250
1805	William Myles, c.d., John Braithwaite, John Stephens	1260
1806	Duncan M'Allum, c.d., John Stephens, John Draper ...	1400
1807*	Timothy Crowther, c.d., John Draper	1560
1808	Cleland Kirkpatrick, c.d., Daniel Isaac, James Parkinson	1000
1809	Cleland Kirkpatrick, Daniel Isaac, James Parkinson ...	1030
1810	Theophilus Lessey, sen., c.d., William Welborne, Edward Batty	1120
1811	Theophilus Lessey, sen., c.d., William Welborne, Abraham E. Farrar; John Hudson, Supernumerary...	1145
1812	Richard Elliott, Abraham E. Farrar; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1180
1813	Isaac Turton, Henry Taft; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1020
1814	Isaac Turton, Henry Taft, George Manwaring; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1150
1815	William Bramwell, Joseph Mann, William Jackson; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1250
1816	William Bramwell, c.d., Joseph Mann, Henry Ranson; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1450
1817	Edmund Grindrod, John Storry, Henry Ranson; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1500
1818	Edmund Grindrod, John Storry, William Dowson; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1450

* Shields constituted this year the head of a Circuit.

Year.	Names of Ministers.	Nos. in Society.
1819	Edmund Grindrod, c.d., John Rigg, William Theobald ; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1400
1820	David M' Nicoll, John Rigg, William Theobald; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1300
1821	David M' Nicoll, c.d., John Rigg, Edward Oakes; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1323
1822	David M' Nicoll, c.d., James Bromley, Edward Oakes ; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1412
1823	John Davis, Josiah Goodwin, James Bromley; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1339
1824	John Davis, sen., c.d., Josiah Goodwin, John Wilson ; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1439
1825	Thomas Wood, c.d., James Sheriffe, Samuel Dunn ; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1500
1826	William Naylor, James Sheriffe, Samuel Dunn ; Duncan M' Allum, John Hudson, Supernumeraries	1475
1827	William Naylor, Thomas Mollard, John Nowell; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1600
1828	William Naylor, c.d., John Nowell, Francis A. West ; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1705
1829	Richard Waddy, c.d., William Smith, Francis A. West ; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1740
	<i>Morpeth</i> —Thomas Walker, 2d	76
1830	Richard Waddy, c.d., William Smith, Francis A. West ; John Hudson, Supernumerary	1600
	<i>Morpeth</i> —Thomas Walker, 2d	120
1831	Valentine Ward, c.d., James Heaton, Titus Close, Joseph R. Stephens, Henry Haynes ; John Hudson, Super- numerary	1600
1832	Valentine Ward, c.d., James Heaton, Titus Close ; John Hudson, Francis Neale, Supernumeraries	1872

NEWCASTLE WEST: BRUNSWICK CHAPEL, &c.

1833	Valentine Ward, c.d., Ninian Barr	1830
1834	Isaac Keeling, c.d., James Everett	1026
1835	Isaac Keeling, c.d., James Everett	1046
1836	William Bacon, John Watson, jun., Thomas M. Fitz- gerald	1046
1837	William Bacon, Willson Brailsford	1050

Year.	Names of Ministers.	Nos. in Society.
1838	William Bacon, Willson Brailsford	1101
1839	Joseph Fowler, c.d., Willson Brailsford	1138
1840	Joseph Fowler, c.d., George Steward; Charles L. Adshead, • Supernumerary	1116
1841	Joseph Fowler, c.d., George Steward; Charles L. Adshead, Supernumerary	1124
1842	Charles Haydon, George Steward; Charles L. Adshead, Supernumerary	1104

NEWCASTLE EAST: NEW-ROAD CHAPEL, &c.

1833	Joseph Mann, John Tindall.....	
1834	Joseph Mann, John C. Leppington	1004
1835	Joseph Mann, John C. Leppington	1006
1836	Samuel Broadbent, James Everett	1026
1837	Samuel Broadbent, James Everett	900
1838	Samuel Broadbent, James Everett	916
1839	John Stephenson, John M. Pearson	931
1840	John Stephenson, John M. Pearson, William T. Radcliffe	889
1841	John Stephenson, Thomas Rowland, William T. Radcliffe	910
1842	William Bird, Thomas Rowland, 1st.....	834

THE WEST AND EAST CIRCUITS RE-UNITED.

1843	Samuel Jackson, c.d., Daniel Chapman, Robert Dugdale, Richard Brown	1963
1844	Samuel Jackson, c.d., Daniel Chapman, Robert Dugdale, Richard Brown	1886
1845	Samuel Jackson, c.d., Samuel Dunn, Nathan Rouse, John H. Beech.....	1696
1846	Henry Davies, c.d., Nathan Rouse, John M. Kirk, John H. Beech.....	1675
1847	Henry Davies, c.d., Nathan Rouse, John M. Kirk, John H. Beech.....	1594
1848	Henry Davies, c.d., John M. Kirk, William Andrews, 1st, John Skidmore; Francis Neale, Supernumerary	1557
1849	William Burt, c.d., William Pemberton, William An- drews, William M. Punshon; Francis Neale, Super- numerary	1615
1850	William Burt, c.d., William Pemberton, William An- drews, William M. Punshon; Francis Neale, Super- numerary	1696

Year.	Names of Ministers.	Nos. in Society.
1851	John P. Haswell, c.d., William Illingworth, William M. Punshon, John D. Geden ; Francis Neale, Supernumerary.....	829
1852	John P. Haswell, c.d., William Illingworth, Luke Tyerman ; Francis Neale, Supernumerary	798
1853	John P. Haswell, c.d., William R. Williams, Luke Tyerman ; Francis Neale, Supernumerary	777
1854	William W. Stamp, c.d., William R. Williams, Luke Tyerman ; Francis Neale, Supernumerary	777
1855	William W. Stamp, c.d., William R. Williams, George Bowden ; Samuel Jackson, Francis Neale, Supernumeraries	750
1856	William W. Stamp, c.d., William H. Taylor, George Bowden ; Samuel Jackson, Francis Neale, Supernumeraries	771
1857	Robert Young, c.d., William H. Taylor, George Bowden ; Samuel Jackson, Francis Neale, Supernumeraries.....	802
1858	Robert Young, c.d., William H. Taylor, John W. Close, William F. Slater ; Samuel Jackson, Francis Neale, Supernumeraries	882
1859	Robert Young, c.d., James Hughes, John W. Close, William F. Slater, Joseph Adams ; Samuel Jackson, Supernumerary	1002
1860	Edward Nye, James Hughes, John W. Close, Joseph Adams ; Samuel Jackson, Supernumerary.....	1343
1861	Edward Nye, James Hughes, John Roberts, 1st, Henry Banks, 2d ; Robert Lyon, Supernumerary	1364
1862	Edward Nye, John Roberts, 1st, Peter Featherstone, Henry W. Holland, George Kennedy.....	1358

THE SABBATH-DAYS PLAN FOR THE TRAVELLING AND LOCAL PREACHERS IN NEWCASTLE CIRCUIT.

1802.	DAYS.	MONTHS.	APRIL.				MAY.				JUNE.				No. PREACH-ERS.
			HOURS.	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20
Orphan-House, Morning ...	9	9	10	13	18	10	12	8	4	9	6	13	18	8	
Ditto, Evening ...	6	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	
Ebenezer, Forenoon	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	16	2	9	3	8	1	18	2	10	3	16	1	1 M. Lumb
Ditto, Afternoon	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	10	3	8	1	13	2	4	3	9	1	9	2	2	2 J. Doncaster
Byker	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	10	3	8	1	13	2	4	3	13	1	9	2	2	3 J. Hudson
Fell, Morning	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	18	21	8	6	16	6	12	5	9	12	10	21	4 W. Smith
Ditto, Afternoon	2	1	18	2	8	3	16	1	12	2	9	3	10	1	5 A. Floyd
Hartley	9 & 2	17	2	15	3	9	1	11	2	17	3	8	1	15	6 J. Fordy
North-Shields, Morning ...	10	2	1	1	2	1	3	3	1	3	2	2	2	3	2
Ditto, Noon & Night...	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ & 6	4	2	3	3	1	1	2	4	3	1	1	1	2	8 W. Hails
South-Shields	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ & 6	2	1	1	2	8	3	3	1	3	2	2	3	4	9 R. Thompson
Newburn	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	—	9	—	2	—	8	—	1	—	4	—	3	10 C. Handyside
Philadelphia and M. Row...	9 & 2	13	20	3	15	7	11	2	5	15	21	1	14	11	11 M. Richardson

Carville	3	6	5	17	13	18	9	10	6	11	—	10	5	16
Walker and Gosforth Pit ...	3 & 6	—	9	—	6	—	12	—	20	—	5	—	6	—
Howdon Pans	10 & 2	15	11	20	17	20	7	18	10	16	11	18	9	20
Hebron	2	14	—	7	—	11	—	15	—	6	—	20	—	14
B. Square and Wellington...	10 & 2	8	13	16	4	12	6	20	13	10	4	15	12	18
Monkseaton	2	—	7	—	20	—	20	—	15	—	17	—	11	—
Cullercoats	2	20	—	11	—	15	—	14	—	20	—	11	—	15
Low Felton	2	—	12	—	6	—	18	—	9	—	6	—	16	—
Paradise	2	—	6	—	12	—	5	—	17	—	13	—	18	—
Lemmington	2½	—	8	—	9	—	10	—	18	—	6	—	6	—
Ovington	7	3	—	4	—	2	—	19	—	1	—	4	—	3
Callerton	9 & 2	3	—	5	—	2	—	19	—	1	—	8	—	3
Kenton	2	—	10	—	18	—	13	—	8	—	12	—	13	—
St. Anthon's	2½	9	—	13	—	10	—	12	—	5	—	13	—	8
Byker, Sacramento	”	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ebenezer, Ditto	”	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
North Shields, Ditto	”	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Shields, Ditto	”	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3

2 C 2

Angus and Son,
Printers.

The Plan from whence the above extract is taken extends to September 19th, 1802. Several orthographical inaccuracies will be perceived; yet, as indicating the extent of the Circuit, and the names of those employed as Preachers, the document is one of historic interest.

F.—PAGE 200.

THE MODEL CHAPEL-DEED;

INTENDED TO BE REFERRED TO IN ALL SUBSEQUENT CONVEYANCES OF
WESLEYAN CHAPEL-PROPERTY.

THIS important document bears date July 3d, 1832; and, by the Conference held that year in Liverpool, is strongly recommended for adoption by the Connexion at large. The main advantages which it presents are—Methodistic security of settlement; uniformity of trusteeship-procedure; and, in the transfer of trust-property, a lessening of the expense incurred. After a general exposition of the economy of Methodism, and also a recital of Mr. Wesley's celebrated "Deed of Declaration," reference to which is essential to the Methodistic settlement of any place of public worship, the Deed presents, in connexion with some minor, yet not unimportant regulations, the following important features:—

1. The appropriation of the chapel to the purposes for which it was built is effectually and permanently secured. Except in cases of extreme embarrassment, or in order to the erection of a larger chapel in its room, neither preachers nor trustees can ever alienate the property from Wesleyan Methodism. "From time to time, and at all times after the erection thereof," the chapel can only "be used, occupied, and enjoyed, as and for a place of religious worship, by a congregation of Protestants of the people called Methodists, in the Connexion established by the late Rev. John Wesley; and for public and other meetings and services, held according to the general rules and usage of the said people called Methodists."

2. The pulpit, together with the religious services held in the chapel, is under the direction of the superintendent of the Circuit for the time being; such persons only being allowed "to preach and expound God's holy word, and to perform the usual acts of religious worship therein," as are appointed by "the Conference of the people called Methodists, or from time to time duly permitted or appointed, according to the general rules and usage of the said people called Methodists, by the superintendent preacher for the time being of the Circuit in which the said chapel shall for the time being be situated." "The times and manner of the various services and ordinances of religious worship to be observed and performed in the said chapel," are also placed under the same jurisdiction.

3. No doctrine or practice is to be taught or promulgated in the chapel "contrary to what is contained in certain Notes on the New Testament, commonly reputed to be the Notes of the Rev. John

Wesley, and in the first four volumes of Sermons, commonly reputed to be written and published by him."

4. In case of immorality, erroneousness in doctrine, or deficiency in ability, on the part of any preacher appointed to the chapel,—unless the matter in question "shall have been previously inquired into and disposed of" by the ministers of the District in which such chapel is situated,—the trustees, or the majority of them, or the stewards and leaders of the Society connected with the chapel, or a majority of them, have power to summon the preachers of the District, together with the trustees, stewards, and leaders of the Circuit in which the chapel is situate; when, if, in the opinion of the majority of the meeting so constituted, the charge is proved, "such preacher shall be considered as removed from the Circuit" in which the chapel is for the time situate.

5. The trustees, as responsible for the moneys borrowed on behalf of chapel-property, have the *entire* direction of whatever income may arise therefrom. In cases of extreme embarrassment, or when no proper persons can be found to undertake in their stead the execution of the trusts, the trustees, on giving notice in writing to the Conference of their intention so to do, may—if within six calendar months next following no means of relief are by that assembly devised—sell or otherwise dispose of the chapel, and apply the proceeds in liquidation of any trustee-liabilities which they have lawfully contracted.

6. Any trustee or trustees who shall voluntarily withdraw, or be duly excluded, from the Methodist Society, and shall so continue for six calendar months next following, shall, on the request in writing of the other trustees, or a majority of them, cease to act; and, on being indemnified from all trustee-liability, shall convey the trust-estate and premises to the other trustees.

7. Upon the decease of any trustee, the surviving trustees "shall, within six calendar months next after request made to them in writing," by his legal representatives, and at their expense, indemnify them from the trustee-liabilities of the deceased trustee.

8. Power to mortgage the trust-premises, if necessary, is also vested in the trustees; but such mortgage must cover the whole of the debt or debts resting upon the trust-property.

Every proviso requisite to the continued Methodistic appropriation of chapel-property, as well as the financial security of the trustees and their families, seems in this admirable Deed to have been anticipated. Had similar arrangements been made in the earlier periods of our Connexional history, much embarrassment and evil would have been avoided.

G.—PAGE 256.

H Y M N

SUNG AT THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION-STONE OF THE NEW
ORPHAN-HOUSE WESLEYAN SCHOOLS, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE :
COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION, BY

BENJAMIN GOUGH, ESQ.,

Of Mountfield, near Faversham, Kent.

Let children give glory to God !

Our high hallelujahs we raise ;
With joy that our feet ever trod

The beautiful temples of grace.
With gladness this day we appear,

Our vows and thanksgivings record ;
The hour of salvation is near,

Hosanna to God and the Lord !

We praise Thee, Thou Author of good ;
The land of our birth Thou hast blest ;
Her foes, in Thy strength, she withstood,
And now Thou hast crown'd her with rest.

O ! since Thou hast given us Thy truth,
The dayspring of light from Thy throne,
We open our hearts in our youth :
Come, Jesus ! and make us Thine own.

Come down, O Redeemer, we pray,
The joy of our meeting increase :
Let sin be now taken away,
And speak to our consciences peace.

O ! give us the pardon we need ;
The heart that is perfect, like Thine :
This pardon is freedom indeed,
This treasure is riches Divine.

Kind Father ! Thy children we are ;
Poor prodigals, see us return :
O ! take to Thy fatherly care,
Instruct us, and help us to learn :
Till, taught in the ways of our God,
Our sanctified spirits made meet,
We soar to Thy heavenly abode,
For ever to bow at Thy feet.

H.—PAGE 262.

TREASURER'S REPORT,

AS PRESENTED JANUARY 10TH, 1869.

THE TREASURER IN ACCOUNT WITH THE WESLEYAN CHAPEL AND DAY-SCHOOL

EFFORT.

Dr.	£.	s.	d.	Cr.	£.	s.	d.
To amount of subscriptions received	1679	13	0	By cash expended on sites	1160	0	0
" Proceeds of bazaar, less expenses	1708	11	7	buildings	3323	18	10
" Interest thereon	76	19	8	" architect	260	0	0
" Balance from former day-school				clerk of works	43	2	0
effort	70	0	0	" outfit and apparatus	108	17	3
" Proceeds of opening-services	202	1	11	" legal expenses	180	2	11
" Do. of farewell-tea, Orphan-House	20	10	0	" printing, stationery, &c.	64	8	6
" Ladies sewing-meeting	36	15	10	" travelling expenses, deputations, carriage, and postage	41	13	6
" Proceeds of breakfast-meeting	19	18	0	" bank charges and interest on loans	19	6	6
" Do. of public ditto	10	16	9	" breakfast-meeting	21	12	6
" Do. of sale of old materials	160	0	0	" other expenses	46	15	4
" Value of site of master's house	50	0	0	To paid off debt on Brunswick-place Chapel	5249	17	3
To Grant by Committee of Council on Education	4024	6	9	By paid off debt on Brunswick-place Chapel	2000	0	0
" Grant by Wesleyan Committee on Education, less cost of plans and commission	1172	0	0				
" Grant by Wesleyan Chapel Committee	68	19	0				
" Loan by ditto, to be repaid without interest in ten years	1000	0	0				
" Balance* due to treasurer, including subsciptions not yet paid	484	11	6				
				£7,249	17	3	

* This balance subsequently redeemed.

In the list of subscriptions, presented with the treasurer's Report at the first Annual Meeting of the subscribers and friends of the New Orphan-House schools, the following may be noted:—

	<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>		<i>£.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
John B. Falconar, Esq.	225	0	0	Messrs. Richardson ...	20	0	0
George Bargate, Esq....	200	0	0	Mr. Robert Robson ...	20	0	0
Wm. Stephenson, Esq.	200	0	0	Rev. Luke and Mrs.			
Mr. & Mrs. Bainbridge	150	0	0	Tyerman	20	0	0
George T. Gibson, Esq.	100	0	0	Mr. John Ward	20	0	0
Ralph Wilson, Esq....	100	0	0	Mr. R. W. Falconar...	15	0	0
Thomas Farmer, Esq....	50	0	0	Mr. W. A. Falconar...	15	0	0
Miss Morrison	50	0	0	Mr. John G. Fenwick	15	0	0
Rob. Pattinson, Esq....	40	0	0	Mr. Robert Bell	10	0	0
James Morrison, Esq.	25	0	0	William Botterill, Esq.	10	0	0
John Morrison, Esq....	25	0	0	Mr. Morland.....	10	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. R. Bur-				Mr. John Patterson ...	10	0	0
nand	25	0	0	Mr. Matthew Slee.....	10	0	0
Mrs. and Miss Airey	20	0	0	Thank-offering	10	0	0
William Brown, Esq.	20	0	0	Mr. Tone	10	0	0
John B. Falconar,				Mr. E. Tweddell	10	0	0
jun., Esq.	20	0	0	Mr. Jacob Vickers ...	10	0	0
Two Friends	20	0	0	Mr. William Wingrave	10	0	0

L.—PAGE 264.

THE ORPHAN-HOUSE WESLEYAN SCHOOLS' BAZAAR.

At a meeting of ladies, convened by the superintendent of the Circuit, on Thursday, April 12th, 1855, at three o'clock P.M., in the vestry of Brunswick-place chapel, steps were taken towards the holding of a bazaar, for the sale of useful and ornamental articles, the proceeds of which should be appropriated in aid of the fund for the erection of the "New Orphan-House Wesleyan schools." Mrs. G. T. Gibson, of Pandon-house, was requested to act as treasurer, and the following ladies as secretaries, of the bazaar-committee:—

- Miss Morrison, Gresham-place.
- Mrs. Wrightson, St. Mary's-terrace.
- Miss Stephenson, Throckley-house.
- Miss Wilson, Victoria-terrace.

After an interval of thirteen months, during which very active preparations were made by the several companies of ladies engaged, the bazaar was held in the Music-Hall, Nelson-street, and the Assembly-Room adjoining. Four days, commencing Tuesday, May 13th, 1856, were devoted to the sale of the immense number of articles then presented. The proceedings of the bazaar were ushered in by the Rev. William R. Williams giving out the following verses, which were sung with great sweetness and feeling :—

“ Except the Lord conduct the plan,
The best-concerted schemes are vain,
And never can succeed ;
We spend our wretched strength for nought :
But if our works in Thee be wrought,
They shall be blest indeed.

“ Lord, if Thou didst Thyself inspire
Our souls with this intense desire
Thy goodness to proclaim,—
Thy glory if we now intend,—
O let our deed begin and end
Complete in Jesu’s name.”

An appropriate selection of holy Scripture was then read, and the Rev. George Bowden engaged in prayer. In a short time the rooms were well filled, and so continued throughout the day; not fewer than a thousand persons being frequently present at one time. The day of opening was remarkably fine; and although the weather was subsequently unpropitious, yet the enthusiasm of the public, and the devoted attention of the ladies engaged, as well as of the gentlemen of the committee, were unabated. The intense interest manifested throughout the whole of the proceedings appeared to reach its height as the closing hour approached, so that when it was publicly announced, late on the evening of Friday, that the receipts of the week were upwards of £1700, there was one spontaneous and united burst of feeling. Frequent cheers resounded through the hall.

The amounts realized by the several companies of ladies who presided at the different stalls, inclusive of the supplementary sale, are as follow :—



"Thus far concerning human effort," writes the Rev. William R. Williams, in an interesting *résumé* of this important movement; "but we trust that the prevailing sentiment of our minds is that of gratitude to God. He has seen fit to try and to humble us; but, in His own time, He has brought us deliverance. Our hearts respond to, and re-echo, the beautiful language of David, which was read at the commencement of our proceedings: 'Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine. . . . Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name. But who' are we, 'and what is Thy people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.'"









